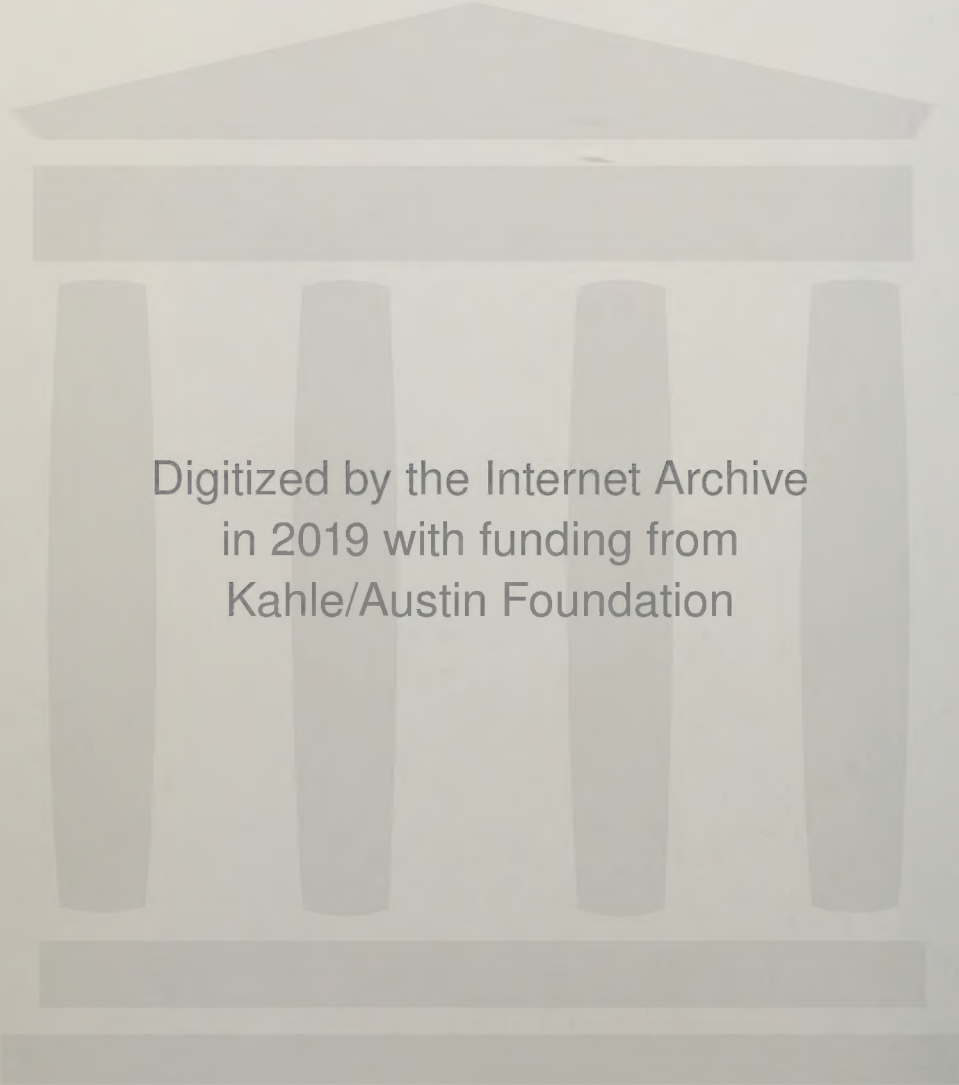


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TOBIAS SMOLLETT

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*A STUDY OF
HIS MISCELLANEOUS WORKS*

BY
ARNOLD WHITRIDGE

PUBLISHED BY
THE AUTHOR

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1925

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ARNOLD WHITRIDGE

INTRODUCTION

THE following study of Smollett's miscellaneous works is submitted to the Department of English and Comparative Literature in Columbia University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Eventually the author intends to include the substance of this monograph in an extended critical biography of Smollett. In the meantime he wishes to express his thanks to Professor W. P. Trent, of whose profound bibliographical knowledge of the eighteenth century he has constantly availed himself. Mr. E. S. Noyes of Yale University has also contributed valuable suggestions and has allowed the author to print his copy of an agreement between Smollett and Dodsley. Of the staff of the Library of Columbia University and of the British Museum the author can only say that they have shown him that rare blend of courtesy and efficiency of which librarians as a class seem to possess the exclusive secret.

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CHRONOLOGICAL CONSPECTUS			
	Smollett's Life	Literary	General
1721	Smollett born at Bonhill, Dumbar- tonshire.	Montesquieu's <i>Letters Persanes</i> .	Walpole becomes First Lord of the Treasury and remains in office until 1742.
1723	.....	Reynolds born.	
1726	.....	<i>Gulliver's Travels</i> .	
1727	.....	.....	Accession of George II.
1729	.....	Burke born.	
1731	.....	Defoe died.	
1732	.....	.....	George Washington born.
1736	Apprenticed to Dr. John Gordon, Glasgow.	.....	Porteous Riots in Edinburgh.
1739	Goes to London.	.....	Capture of Porto Bello by Ad- miral Vernon.
1740	Sails as surgeon's mate in Sir Chal- oner Ogle's squadron to join Vernon in the West Indies.	<i>Pamela</i> .	
1741	After failure of Cartagena expedi- tion remains for two years in the West Indies.	.....	Futile attack upon Cartagena by Admiral Vernon and General Wentworth.
1742	.....	<i>Joseph Andrews</i> .	
1743	.....	.....
1744	Settles as surgeon in Downing Street.	Pope died.	Beginning of Pelham ministry.

1745	.....	Swift died.	The Young Pretender defeated at Culloden.
1746	<i>Advice, a Satire.</i> Smollett's first publication.		
1747	Probable date of marriage to Anne Lascelles.	<i>Clarissa Harlowe.</i>	
1748	<i>Roderick Random.</i>	.....	Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle.
1749	Goes to live at Monmouth House in Chelsea.	<i>Tom Jones.</i>	
1750	Obtains degree of M.D. from Marischal College, Aberdeen.		
1751	<i>Peregrine Pickle.</i>	<i>Amelia.</i>	Adoption of Gregorian Calendar.
1752	.....	<i>Sir Charles Grandison.</i>	
1753	<i>Ferdinand Count Falheim.</i>	Fielding died.	The Duke of Newcastle succeeds his brother, Mr. Pelham, as Prime Minister. Henry Fox, Secretary of State.
1754	.....		Braddock's defeat.
1755	Translation of Don Quixote.	Johnson's Dictionary.	Beginning of Seven Years' War.
1756	Beginning of <i>Critical Review.</i>	.....	Coalition Ministry of the Duke of Newcastle and Pitt.
1757	Garrick produces the <i>Reprisal.</i>	.....
1758	<i>Complete History of England</i> (begun 1757).		
1759	Sued for libel by Admiral Knowles.	<i>Tristram Shandy</i> (first two vols.) <i>Candidate.</i>	Capture of Quebec, death of Wolfe, Battle of Quiberon Bay.

CHRONOLOGICAL CONSPECTUS—Continued

	Smollett's Life	Literary	General
1760	<i>British Magazine</i> started.		Accession of George III.
1761			Bourbon Family Compact. Pitt insisting that war ought to be declared on Spain, resigns. Ministry of Duke of Newcastle with Bute Secretary of State.
1762	Writes <i>The Briton</i> , a weekly pamphlet in support of Bute.		War declared against Spain. Ministry of Bute; Grenville Secretary of State.
1763	<i>The Briton</i> suspended after 38 numbers. Owing to ill-health and death of his daughter Smollett goes abroad.		Peace of Paris. Resignation of Bute. Ministry of Grenville. No. 45 of <i>The North Briton</i> by John Wilkes.
1764		<i>The Castle of Otranto.</i>	
1765	Returns to England.		Passage of Stamp Act.
1766	<i>Travels through France and Italy.</i> Revisits Scotland.	<i>The Vicar of Wakefield.</i>	Repeal of Stamp Act.
1768	Leaves England and settles at Leghorn.	<i>A Sentimental Journey.</i>	Wilkes member for Middlesex.
1769	<i>The History and Adventures of an Atom.</i>		Napoleon born.
1770			<i>Letters of Junius</i> in the <i>Daily Advertiser</i> .
1771	<i>The Expedition of Humphry Clinker.</i>	Wordsworth born. Scott born.	Ministry of Lord North.

TOBIAS SMOLLETT

A STUDY

OF HIS MISCELLANEOUS WORKS

CHAPTER I

SMOLLETT—POET, HISTORIAN AND DRAMATIST

ANY attempt to write a book about Smollett which ignores *Roderick Random*, *Peregrine Pickle*, and *Humphry Clinker*, or at least assigns to them only a minor rôle, may well challenge comparison with that incomplete production of *Hamlet* of which we hear so often. The only excuse for playing *Hamlet* without the Prince is that it allows us to concentrate our attention upon the minor characters. Smollett has habitually been treated as a novelist and as a novelist only. It has been tacitly assumed by most literary historians that he is the obvious foil to Fielding and that compared to Fielding his humor is mere horseplay. The late Sir Walter Raleigh argued with perfect justice that Smollett's combative intensity made it impossible for him to take the detached view of life that is characteristic of the great humorist. Hazlitt claimed for Fielding "a superior insight into the springs of human character." According to Hazlitt, there is "a tone of vulgarity about all Smollett's productions. He excels most as the lively caricaturist, Fielding as the exact painter and profound metaphysician." Thackeray

seamps Smollett outrageously in *The English Humourists*, and then covers himself by admitting that *Humphry Clinker* is the most laughable story that has ever been written since the goodly part of novel-writing began." The equable Taine, obviously ill at ease among the brutalities of eighteenth century English fiction, is frankly disgusted by Smollett. Fielding he can stand, but "Smollett is good for nothing but to shock and tyrannize over others." Even in their own time the two novelists were sometimes bracketed together. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu writes to her daughter, the Countess of Bute (June 23, 1754), "I guessed Roderick Random to be his (Fielding's) though without his name." In 1782 a French translation of Roderick Random was printed at Geneva with Fielding's name on the title page. The confusion between Fielding and Smollett lasted as late as 1805, when a Dutch translation of Roderick Random was published in Amsterdam and again attributed to Fielding. The earliest appearance of Smollett's work on the Continent was a French translation of Peregrine Pickle, entitled *Histoire et Aventures de Sir Williams Pickle*, published in Amsterdam, 1753. In this translation the name of the author is not mentioned.

It is not the purpose of this book to examine the comparative merits of Fielding and Smollett, nor is it our intention to embark upon an exhaustive disquisition on the novel of the eighteenth century. The ancestry of the picaresque novel may be traced back via *Gil Blas* and *Guzman d'Alfarache* to its faint beginnings in the *Satiricon* of Petronius and Apuleius' *Golden Ass*. The fox in the beast fables is one of the most engaging members of the vast family of rogues in fiction. The picaro made his way into English literature during the Elizabethan age and he is by no means dead yet. Harrison

Ainsworth gave him a new lease of life in such books as *Jack Sheppard* and *Rookwood*, and in our own time he continually appears in popular magazines in the guise of the gentleman burglar. No doubt Smollett will chiefly be remembered for his novels and more especially for those wonderful pictures of sailors, Scotsmen, and Welshmen, by means of which the picaresque romance in his hands became a naturalized English subject.

While admitting the perennial vitality of Jack Rattlin, Commodore Trunnion and Lieutenant Lismahago, we wish to call attention to another, and as it seems to us, a neglected side of Smollett. His contemporaries looked upon him not only as a novelist, but as an all-round man of letters. Let us try to resurrect the "learned, ingenious Dr. Smollett" as he appeared to them—a novelist and doctor of course, but also a poet, playwright, historian, pamphleteer, editor, in fact the most successful purveyor to the booksellers in all literary London.

Smollett's success was not easily achieved. Isaac d'Israeli cites him as the classic example of an author by profession who won his way to financial independence at the cost of his life.¹ Making due allowance for d'Israeli's gloomy view of the inevitable misery that awaits a professional author, Smollett certainly met with his full share of difficulties. He arrived in London in the year 1739, an impecunious Scotsman eighteen years old, with nothing to recommend him but a few letters of introduction, and a five-act tragedy in his pocket which nobody wanted. The vicissitudes of this tragedy, called *The Regicide*, inflamed Smollett with a hatred of patrons no less bitter than Johnson's feelings towards Chesterfield. The play never reached the stage, but it was published in 1749 with an angry introduction in which Smollett struck right and

¹ *Calamities of Authors*. London, 1812. Vol. I. pp. 1-24.

left at all patrons, critics, and playhouse managers. Anyone reading the play to-day will certainly sympathize with the managers. The murder of James I, the poet-king of Scotland and the heroic self-sacrifice of Katherine Douglas is an ideal theme for romantic drama. Though Smollett was a thorough-going Scotsman there is no suggestion of Scotch flavor about his tragedy. His dialogue is always stilted, usually to the pitch of absurdity. The hero's reference to Eleanora, the heroine, as "the bleeding fair" is typical of the flowers of speech with which this school-boy tragedy is adorned. That Smollett should have written such a play at the age of eighteen is not remarkable. Many poets have been guilty of vapid Juvenilia, but that Smollett should have clung to his tragedy when he was a grown man and continued to resent the refusal of managers to produce it is most surprising.

While the young Smollett was walking the streets of London railing at "those little fellows (theatrical managers) who are sometimes called great men," the Government unconsciously came to his assistance by declaring war on Spain. Smollett, who had been apprenticed to John Gordon, a surgeon of Glasgow, before coming to London, obtained a position as surgeon's mate on the battleship *Cumberland*.² In this capacity he took part in the ill-fated expedition against Cartagena (1741).³ He ascribes the failure of this expedition to the mutual jealousy between Admiral Vernon and General Wentworth, who

² Smollett is supposed to have ridiculed Gordon under the name of *Potion* in *Roderick Random*. In *Humphry Clinker*, however, he expresses himself much more cordially: "I was introduced to Dr. Gordon, a patriot of truly noble spirit, who is the father of the linen manufactory in that place, and was the great promoter of the city work-house, infirmary and other works of public utility. Had he lived in ancient Rome, he would have been honoured with a statue at the public expense."

³ Smollett has left three accounts of this expedition. First, a semi-autobiographical account in *Roderick Random*, ch. XXXI,

commanded the land-forces. In April, 1741, the squadron was compelled by sickness and the incompetence of the commanders to raise the siege and return to its base in Jamaica. "Our expedition to the West Indies," says the *London Magazine*, "was the standing joke of every Court in Europe, as well as us at home" (*London Magazine*, 1742, p. 81). Smollett appears to have quitted the service in Jamaica, where he resided for some time presumably practicing medicine, and where he met and afterwards married Anne Lascelles.⁴ Of this lady we know very little beyond the fact that she was a native of the island and that at the time of marriage she possessed considerable property in houses and slaves. In a letter to an admirer in New Jersey, May 8, 1763, Smollett says that through his wife he enjoyed "a comfortable though moderate estate" in Jamaica.⁵

XXXIII. Secondly, in his *History of England*, Vol. III, ch. III. Thirdly, a separate *Account of the Expedition against Cartagena* in Vol. V of a *Compendium of Authentic and Entertaining Voyages digested in Chronological Series*, etc., 7 vols., London, 1756, a compilation of which Smollett was editor. In these three accounts Smollett makes substantially the same criticism, i.e. that the land and sea forces never co-operated, that General Wentworth was perfectly incapable, and that Admiral Vernon and Captain Knowles, his chief engineer, rather than risk their ships contented themselves with long range bombardments that only contributed to the amusement of the enemy. For further information on this subject consult *Admiral Vernon and the Navy with an answer to Smollett's criticisms*, by Douglas Ford, London, 1907.

⁴ The exact date of Smollett's marriage is not known. In the absence of any proof it is assumed by his biographers that he was married in London about the year 1747. Hannay suggests that he may have been married in Jamaica, 1744, before returning to England. *Life of Smollett* by David Hannay, London, 1887.

⁵ The question of Smollett's finances has never been satisfactorily unraveled. Between 1753 and 1756 the remittances from the West Indies were very irregular, and during these years he seems to have been constantly hard pressed for money. A letter to his friend Dr. Macaulay dated Chelsea, November 16, 1753, about a debt of 50 guineas, proves him to have been in very severe straits. "Had I credit enough," he writes, "to borrow the money in Lon-

By the year 1746 Smollett was back in London practising surgery in Downing Street and writing vicious satires on the perfidy of statesmen and literary patrons. His first publications were *Advice: A Satire* (London, printed for T. Cooper at the Globe in Paternoster Row, 1746; price one shilling), and *Reproof: A Satire, the Sequel to Advice* (London, 1747). Both poems are written in the form of dialogues supposed to be carried on between the Poet and his Friend. The Poet indignantly spurns the suggestion that he should make his way by eulogizing the statesmen then in power. When his Friend starts to enumerate the "sage Newcastle," "Grafton, tow'ring Atlas of the throne," "Granville and Bath illustrious," and "Pitt the unshaken Abdiel," the poet cuts him short:

Th' advice is good: the question only, whether
These names and virtues ever dwelt together?

In the course of the argument he attacks the more odious vices of the time and concludes with the wish that he may soon quit the "inhospitable shores of life." The same themes are revived in the sequel *Reproof*, in which Smollett takes particular pleasure in castigating all army contractors and military cowards, meaning especially Sir John Cope, whose behavior at Prestonpans had certainly not

don you should not be without it a day longer, even though I should find it difficult to raise half the sum in England, even to save me from a jail. Never was I so much harassed with duns as now; a persecution which I owe to the detention of that remittance from Jamaica, which I have expected every day since last Christmas, upon the faith of promises sent from time to time." Other letters to Dr. Macaulay (April 6 and September 10, 1756), who appears to have played the part of a rather reluctant fairy god-mother, tell the same story. These have been republished in the *Miscellaneous Works of Smollett*, 6 vol. Edinburgh, 1820, ed. by R. Anderson, Vol. I, pp. 163-169. After the publication of his *Compleat History of England*, 1757-8, for which he is said to have received £2000, his financial worries were doubtless somewhat relieved.

been *sans peur et sans reproche*. He also speaks his mind about John Rich, the manager of the Covent-Garden theater. Smollett had written an opera for this theater entitled *Alceste*, for which Handel had composed the music. Finding that Rich had no intention of using Smollett's libretto, Handel adapted the music to Dryden's lesser *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day*.⁶ The rest of Smollett's poetry, which does not bulk very large, appeared separately and was not collected until after his death.⁷ *Roderick Random* contains the verses *On Celia, Playing on a Harpsichord* (Ch. 40), and *Humphry Clinker* the *Ode to Leven Water*. The most graceful of his lyrics "To fix her, 'twere a task in vain," was included by Locker-Lampson in his *Lyra Elegantiarum*. The *Ode to Independence*, which is probably but not certainly Smollett's, was published posthumously by those two Elzevirs of Glasgow, Robert and Andrew Foulis. The *Tears of Scotland*, the most genuine and the most spirited poem that Smollett ever wrote, inveighs against the atrocities of the "Butcher" Cumberland. According to Dr. Alexander Carlyle, whose autobiography contains some charming recollections of Smollett, he and a few other Scotsmen were dining together at a coffee-house in Cockspur Street the night that the news of Culloden arrived. Smollett was so incensed by the arrogance of John Bull, who "is as haughty and valiant to-night as he was abject and cowardly on the Black Wednesday when the Highlanders were at Derby," that he composed his lament forthwith in a white heat of passion.

The *Burlesque Ode*, printed in the first edition of *Peregrine Pickle*, illustrates a less likable side of Smol-

⁶ Hawkins, *History of Music*, London, 1875, Vol. II, p. 878.

⁷ Plays and Poems written by Tobias Smollett, with memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Author, London, 1777.

lett's character. It is a deliberate satire on Lord Lyttelton's *Monody on the death of his wife*. Lyttelton was one of the patrons of literature to whom Smollett had shown his *Regicide*, and by whom Smollett appears to have felt himself slighted. Probably Lyttelton had made the mistake of temporizing instead of telling the pitiless truth. He was an agreeable nobleman, the friend of Thomson and Fielding, who dedicated *Tom Jones* to him, and a man of some small literary talent himself. In politics he was the vigorous opponent of Sir Robert Walpole, so that allowance must be made for some element of malice in Horace Walpole's description—"with the figure of a spectre and the gesticulations of a puppet he talked heroics through his nose." Lady Lyttelton, whom Mrs. Delany describes as "like Cleopatra in her bloom," died on January 19, 1747. The fact that Smollett should have ridiculed a man's devotion to the memory of his wife does not seem to have excited any particular disgust. "There was something accountable enough to me," writes Shenstone, "in their burlesquing Mr. Lyttelton's *Monody*. He is, you know, engaged in a party, and his poem, though an extraordinary fine composition, was too tender for the public ear."⁸

Smollett pursued Lyttelton with his ridicule for some time. In *Roderick Random*, published in 1748, Lyttelton and Garrick are satirized under the names of Lord Rattle and Marmozet, the perfidious patron and the dishonest actor-manager.⁹ The introduction to *The Regicide*, to which we have already referred, is one long plaint over the delays and indignities that await the young dramatist. In *Peregrine Pickle* (1751) he returned to the charge

⁸ *Chronicles of the Eighteenth Century*, by Maud Wyndham, 2 vols., London, 1924, Vol. I, p. 239, *et passim*.

⁹ Ch. 61-63.

for the last time. Again we find the ingenuous author struggling to make his way in a career that is beset by corruption on every side. The following passage, quoted at length as it was omitted from subsequent editions, refers to a meeting of a literary club. Gosling Serag, it need hardly be said, stands for Lyttelton, and the trading Westminster Justice for his protégé, Henry Fielding. "One would imagine (said the chairman), that you had made an unsuccessful application to his patronage; but, notwithstanding all this eloquent declamation, the truth of which I shall not pretend to invalidate, I do aver, that Gosling Serag Esq., is at this day the best milch-cow that any author ever stroaked; for, over and above his vanity, which lays him open to the necessities of all writers who can tickle though never so awkwardly, he possesses such a comfortable share of simplicity, or rather lack of penetration, as cannot fail to turn to account with those who practice upon it. Let a scribbler (for example) creep into his notice by the most abject veneration, implore his judgment upon some performance, assume a look of awful admiration at his remarks, receive and read his emendations with pretended extasy, exert himself officiously about his person, make interest to be employed in running upon his errands, bawl for him upon all occasions in common conversation, prose and rhyme, sit in presence of this great man with an apparent sense of his own nothingness, and when he opens his mouth, listen with a foolish face of praise; happy if he has an opportunity to feed him with the soft pap of dedication, or by affecting an idiotic ignorance of the manners of life, to insinuate himself into his opinions as a person absolutely detached from all worldly pursuits; like a sly brother of the quill, who, in going out dropped a banknote upon the floor of his apartment, in such manner as that it could not escape the notice of

Gosling, who viewing it accordingly, 'Heavens (said he with his hands and eyes lifted up) what philosophic contempt must that man have for the pleasures of wealth.' Yes, I insist upon it, there are arts which will never fail to engage the friendship of Mr. Serag, which will be sooner or later manifested in some warm sine-cure, ample subscription, post or reversion; and I advise Mr. Spondy to give him the refusal of this same pastoral: who knows but he may have the good fortune of being listed in the number of his beef-eaters; in which case he may in process of time, be provided for in customs or church; when he is inclined to marry his own cook-wench, his gracious patron may condescend to give the bride away; and finally settle him in his old age as a trading Westminster Justice.' (*Peregrine Pickle*, 1st edition, ch. 102.)

It may already have been observed that Smollett was unduly sensitive even to the extent of imagining a slight where none was intended. In the passage just quoted the reference to Fielding, whose second wife was indeed his housekeeper if not his cook-wench, initiated a quarrel between the two novelists for which Smollett made amends only after Fielding's death. When *Tom Jones* appeared in 1749, Smollett was possessed with the idea that Fielding had taken his Partridge from Roderick Random's faithful servant Strap. With the publication of *Amelia* he jumped to the further conclusion that Miss Matthews was cribbed from his Miss Williams, one of the minor characters in *Peregrine Pickle*. It is difficult to perceive any grounds for such a suspicion. Possibly Fielding's success had something to do with it. More fortunate than Smollett he had made a certain reputation as a dramatist. Furthermore he was the acknowledged friend of Garrick and Lyttelton, both of whom had ignored Smollett's overtures. In his *Jacobite's Journal*, Fielding had promised to recom-

mend every book in which he could find the least merit, but though *Clarissa Harlowe* was warmly greeted no word of approval greeted the appearance of *Roderick Random*.¹⁰

Fielding took a very mild revenge upon Smollett for his bad manners in *Peregrine Pickle*. The first number of his *Covent-Garden Journal* (Jan. 4, 1752) announced a paper war between the Forces under Sir Alexander Drawcansir and the Army of Grub Street. The idea, not a novel one in any case, may have been borrowed from Swift's *Battle of the Books*. General A. Millar, the bookseller, disperses the Grub Street detachments that had been sent to garrison the more eminent printing-presses. All take to their heels except two small bodies under command of "Peeragrim Puckle" and "Rodorick Random." One week after Fielding had perpetrated his little joke Smollett retaliated with "A Faithful Narrative of the Base and Inhuman Arts that were lately practiced upon the Brain of Habbakkuk Hilding" (Jan. 15, 1752). It was a vicious reply to what was after all only a piece of good-humored banter. The mere statement that "Rodorick, in a former Skirmish with the People called Critics, had owed some slight Success more to the Weakness of the Critics, than to any Merit of his own" hardly justifies Smollett's fifteen pages of concentrated filth. In this pamphlet he represents Justice Hilding as a lunatic addicted to the most disgusting practices. After being drugged by our old friend Sir Gosling Serag, Hilding mounts a jackass and goes forth to do battle with Master Random and P. Pickle. In the scuffle that follows, Amelia, Captain Booth and Tom Jones are speedily routed by the superior forces of Commodore Trunnion. The *Covent-Garden Journal* did not vouchsafe an answer and the controversy

¹⁰ *The Jacobite's Journal*, Jan. 2, 1748 and March 5, 1748.

ended with Smollett in possession of the field. He made what amends he could to both Lyttelton and Fielding in his Continuation of the *Compleat History of England*. His review of the literature of the age singles out "the delicate taste, polished muse and tender feelings of Lyttelton." The eulogy of Fielding is still more handsome. "The genius of Cervantes was transfused into the novels of Fielding, who painted the characters and ridiculed the follies of life with equal strength, humor, and propriety."¹¹

Though the protagonists in this literary quarrel had nothing more to say, the discussion was taken up by Grub Street in *The Covent-Garden Journal Extraordinary*, January 20, 1752.¹² This pamphlet contains a facetious account of Smollett's entrance into the newspaper war. Before a permanent peace can be assured, Sir Alexander Draweansir's forces (i.e. Fielding) must reduce "a small Hutt, built of mud and covered with thistles." Another contributor to the fray was William Kenrick, author of *Fun: A Parodi-tragi-comical Satire*. This parody was printed but apparently never acted. It follows the general lines of *Macbeth*, with frequent excursions into contemporary literature. The witches brew a hell-broth of Dullness into which they pour a *Jacobite's Journal*, the body of Tom Thumb, Pamela and Clarissa. Random and Pickle both contribute their virtue to the charm, but Tom Jones escapes.¹³ Although one of the characters of this parody is

¹¹ Continuation of the *Compleat History of England*, 1764, Vol. IV, p. 127.

¹² The only known copy of this pamphlet is in the Yale University Library. Prof. Wilbur Cross in his *History of Henry Fielding* suggests Bonnell Thornton as the probable author.

¹³ *Fun: A Parodi-tragi-comical Satire*. As it was to have been performed at the Rose-Tavern on Thursday, February 13, 1752. But Suppressed by a Special Order from the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen, Dublin. Printed by Richard James at Newton's Head in Dane Street. 1752.

named Sir Nackadil Trunnion he bears no particular resemblance to Smollett's Commodore.

From those by-ways of Grub Street we must make our way back to Smollett, who has gradually been establishing himself in the world of letters. By the year 1752 he already has two novels to his credit, some pungent satires in verse, an abortive tragedy, and a grievance against not a few of his more successful contemporaries. At the same time, having obtained a degree of M.D. from Marischal College, Aberdeen, he has been practising medicine in his home in Chelsea.¹⁴ Sir Walter Scott thinks that he probably failed in the profession of medicine "because he refused to render himself agreeable to female patients." It is difficult to conceive of Smollett's ever acquiring the correct bedside manner, but there is surely a more obvious reason for his failure. He was engaged in so many literary undertakings that he could hardly have given much time to his regular profession. Apart from his *Essay on the External Use of Water* (1752) which he is said to have written in support of Mr. Cleland, a surgeon and local reformer in Bath, we know very little of Smollett's medical activities. He admits having revised the second and third volumes of Dr. Smellie's treatise on Midwifery, and he also states positively that while occupying the editorial chair of *The Critical Review*, he conducted the literary warfare on behalf of Dr. William Hunter against Dr.

¹⁴ Smollett appears to have resided in Downing Street up till 1749 when he moved to Monmouth House, in Laurence Street, Chelsea. The house had been previously inhabited by the wife of the ill-fated Duke of Monmouth, from whom it was named. John Gay, the poet, had also lived there. It was no doubt Monmouth House that Smollett describes in *Humphry Clinker* as the scene of his literary factory. According to Charles Bucke, author of a life of Mark Akenside, Smollett lived for some time in a court leading out of Dean Street, Soho, but Smollett himself makes no mention of it, nor do his biographers. *Life of Akenside* by C. Bucke. London. 1832, p. 42.

Monro of Edinburgh.¹⁵ An anecdote in *The Monthly Review*, published fifty years after Smollett's death,¹⁶ mentions his having attended professionally "a young gentleman at the great school towards the end of Church Lane," but this lone reference hardly indicates a thriving practice. It is significant, however, that Smollett moved in a medical rather than a literary circle and that his friends, or at least the men to whom he wrote letters, were more often doctors than authors.¹⁷

During the years 1753-56 Smollett was hard pressed for money and it was accordingly during this period that he was most actively engaged in hack work.¹⁸ No doubt he found that the booksellers, ruthless as they were, afforded him a better chance of earning a living than an occasional patient, such as "the young man at the end of Church Lane." After *The Adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom* (1753) he devoted himself mainly to his

¹⁵ See Foot's *Life of John Hunter*, 1794, p. 61.

¹⁶ *Monthly Review*, Vol. 52, p. 236. October 1, 1821.

¹⁷ Among his friends may be mentioned Dr. William and Dr. John Hunter, to whom his *Travel Letters* were probably addressed, Dr. Macaulay, Dr. Alexander Reid, Dr. Dickson, who attended his daughter in her last illness, Dr. Smellie and Dr. Armstrong, author of *The Art of Preserving Health*. See *Glaister's Life of Dr. Smellie and his Contemporaries*.

¹⁸ Not the least interesting of Smollett's shifts to raise money was his revision of Alexander Drummond's *Travels through Different Cities of Germany, Italy, Greece and several Parts of Asia*, for which Smollett received 100 pounds. Alexander Drummond was consul at Aleppo and it was through his brother, Provost Drummond of Edinburgh, that Smollett was given the commission. (See Smollett's letter to Dr. Macaulay, May 27, 1753. Anderson, Vol. I, p. 163.) These letters, printed in one volume folio 1754, may well have given Smollett the idea for an account of his own Travels. One curious point of resemblance is the careful Register of Weather, which is not included in any other contemporary book of travel. Drummond gives the thermometer table at Aleppo from 1747 to 1749. At Nice 1764-65, Smollett was even more meticulous. His Register of the Weather in the appendix to the Travels through France and Italy contains a careful record of temperature, wind and rain.

translation of *Don Quixote*. The work was issued by Rivington, March, 1755, in two quarto volumes with a dedication to Don Ricardo Wall, Spanish ambassador to London. It can hardly have been a pure labor of love, having been paid for, as Smollett tells us himself, five years before.¹⁹ His *Don Quixote* met with a mixed reception. "I am sorry my friend Smollett," observes Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, "loses his time in translations; he has certainly a talent for invention, though I think it flags a little in his last work (*Count Fathom*). *Don Quixote* is a difficult work; I shall certainly never desire to read any attempt to new-dress him." Cowper on the other hand evidently enjoyed it tremendously: "Smollett," he said, "had a drollery of his own which for aught I know may suit an English taste as well as that of Cervantes, perhaps better, because he is somewhat more intelligible." Smollett probably picked up a knowledge of Spanish in the West Indies, and his translation, if it offended some people by its inaccuracies and others by its affectation of solemn humor, was immensely popular. It was generally held to be less elegant than Jarvis's translation and closer to the original than Motteux'.²⁰

¹⁹ A pamphlet by John Shebbeare, *The Occasional Critic*, contains the following reference to Smollett's qualifications as a Spanish scholar: "A. Millar, soliciting subscriptions to this edition (Smollett's) of *Don Quixote*, when it was objected by one of his countrymen that the Translator did not understand Spanish assured him that the Author had been full six weeks to study that Language amongst the native Spaniards at Brussels."

²⁰ A full account of the relative merits of Motteux's, Jarvis's and Smollett's translations of *Don Quixote* will be found in Lord Woodhouselee's *Essay on the Principle of Translation*, London, 1791, ch. XII. Lord Woodhouselee, however, does not mention Skelton's translation, 1620, which is better known to-day than any of the other three. See also *Remarks on the Proposals lately published for a new Translation of Don Quixote. In a Letter from a Gentleman in the Country to a Friend in Town*, London: Printed and sold by W. Reeve, in Fleet Street, 1755.

It would appear that the booksellers kept Smollett at work on translations throughout most of his active literary life. His translation of *Gil Blas* was published in 1748, the same year as *Roderick Random*. He also edited and gave his name to a Voltaire in thirty-eight volumes, 1761-1774, for which he claims to have done only a small part of the translation but all of the notes historical and critical. (See Smollett's "Letter to a Friend in New Jersey," already quoted. Anderson I, p. 170, also published in *The Atlantic Monthly*, June, 1859.) These notes display Smollett's usual vitality coupled with violent prejudice.²¹ His admiration for Voltaire which was very keen at the beginning of the translation seems to have cooled as the work progressed. This gradual change of opinion explains Churchill's caustic reference in *The Apology to the Critical Reviewers*:

Nor can we hope he will a stranger spare,
Who gives no quarter to his friend Voltaire.

Another translation which Smollett sponsored was that of Fénelon's *Telemachus*, published in 1776, five years after his death. Smollett completed still another commission for the booksellers in *Compendium of authentic and entertaining Voyages*, digested in a chronological Series; the whole exhibiting a clear view of the Customs, Manners, Religion, Government, Commerce, and Natural History, of most nations of the known World; illustrated and adorned with a variety of genuine Charts, Maps, Plans, Heads, etc., curiously engraved, in 7 vols." This compilation was undertaken at the expense of Dodsley, "a man who had sense and spirit enough to reward authors according to

²¹ See his remarks on the Roman Catholic Church. *Works of Voltaire* translated by Dr. Smollett (1761), Vol. I, p. 297.

their genius and capacity.”²² For this collection of voyages Smollett wrote his *Account of the Expedition against Cartagena*, 1741, never before published. Otherwise he seems to have had little to do with it beyond selecting the material.²³

From the purely financial point of view none of Smollett’s undertakings for the booksellers can be compared with his “*Compleat History of England*, deduced from the descent of Julius Caesar to the Treaty of Aix-la-

²² Anderson, I, p. 53.

²³ For the following copy of an agreement between Smollett and the booksellers for his *Compendium of Voyages* I am indebted to Prof. E. S. Noyes of Yale University.

MEMORANDUM.

May 5th, 1753.

It is this day agreed between Dr. Smollett of the one part and Robert Dodsley, James Rivington and William Strahan on the other part as follows viz.:

The said Dr. Smollett engages to compile with all convenient speed so as the whole be finished on or before the first day of August 1754 *A New Collection of Voyages and Travels* from the best books on these subjects extant, to be finished in seven volumes in duodecimo, in the same manner as a book called *A Tour through Great Britain* and to contain in the whole one hundred sheets or thereabouts: In consideration of which the said Robert Dodsley, James Rivington and William Strahan agree to pay the said Dr. Smollett at the rate of one guinea and a half per sheet to be paid on the Delivery of the copy of each volume.

Witness our hands.

Ts Smollett
R Dodsley
Jams Rivington
Will: Strahan.

Descriptions of travel of all kinds commanded a ready market in the 18th century. A book which from its title appears to have been inspired by Smollett’s Collection although it makes no direct reference to him is “*The World Displayed: or a Curious Collection of Voyages and Travels*, selected from the Writers of all Nations. In which the Conjectures and Interpolations of several vain Editors and Translators are expunged; every Relation is made concise and plain and the Divisions of Countries and Kingdoms are distinctly noted.” London, J. Newbery, 1759.

Chapelle, 1748, containing the transactions of one thousand eight hundred and three years." Not only did Smollett himself clear £2000, but it is generally believed, according to Anderson, "that he sold the Continuation of the History to his printer (J. Rivington) at a price which enabled the purchaser to sell it to Mr. Baldwin, the bookseller, on the day the bargain was made at a profit of no less than one thousand pounds." The *Compleat History* was issued in four volumes 1757-58 and reprinted the same year in detached parts, of which the weekly sale amounted to more than ten thousand.²⁴ In 1758-60 a second edition was published in eleven volumes with a handsome dedication to Mr. Pitt. The *Continuation of the History of England* in four volumes was published in 1762. A fifth volume supposed to have been written by W. Guthrie brought down the History to 1765. Smollett's *History of England* is usually seen now in a corrupted form as a continuation of Hume. The combination of these two histories was purely a bookseller's device and never intended by either of the authors. Smollett's share extends from the Revolution of 1688 to the death of George II. In this form his history was published in five volumes in 1785.

Smollett was much criticized by the Whigs for his supposed Tory prejudices. The mere mention of the Stuarts without vilification was sufficient to brand him in their eyes as a dangerous Jacobite. Hume evidently considered Smollett a dangerous rival or even his superior. In a letter to the historian Robertson, March 12, 1759, he writes: "A plague take you! Here I sat near the his-

²⁴ "11,000 copies of that trash were instantly sold." H. Walpole. See also Warburton's letters to Hurd: "When Clarendon and Temple wrote History they little thought that time was so near when a vagabond Scot should write nonsense ten thousand strong."

torical summit of Parnassus, immediately under Dr. Smollett; and you have the impudence to squeeze yourself by me, and place yourself directly under his feet.”²⁵

The art of history has undergone such changes since the day of Hume and Smollett that it is not easy to understand how the reading public could have plowed through their arid volumes. Smollett's history like the others of his time is a record of wars, treaties and legislation, embellished with an occasional “portrait” of a monarch. He claims to have written it in fourteen months in the course of which time he examined above three hundred books of reference, but in spite of this heart-breaking toil we learn more about the people of England from the *Expedition of Humphry Clinker* than Smollett ever vouchsafed in his *History of England*.

One of the beneficial results of Smollett's *History* was a complete reconciliation with Garrick. In the sketch of the liberal arts at the end of George the Second's reign, he states that “The exhibitions of the stage were improved to the most exquisite entertainment, by the talents and the management of Garrick, who greatly surpassed all his predecessors, and perhaps every other nation, in his genius for acting, in the sweetness and variety of his tones, the irresistible magic of his art, the fire and vivacity of his action, the elegance of his attitude, and the whole pathos of expression.” The great actor, always avid of praise, was so gratified by this panegyric that he immediately wrote to Smollett, and presented him with a copy of his *Winter's Tale*. Smollett acknowledged the gift in a graceful note in which he insisted that it was a duty incumbent upon him “to make public atonement in a work of truth, for wrongs done in a work of fiction.” It will be remem-

²⁵ J. K. Burton's *Life of Hume*, Edinburgh, 1846, Vol. II, p. 52.

bered that Smollett had satirized Garrick in the character of Marmozet in *Roderick Random*. (Ch. 61-63.) The old rancor against actor-managers had already been dissipated by Garrick's production of *The Reprisal*, Smollett's only successful dramatic venture. *The Reprisal, or the Tars of Old England* was produced at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, January 22, 1757. It was a broad farce glorifying the British sailor and depicting the French as a nation of *petits maîtres*. A young Englishman and his fiancée who have gone out in a pleasure-boat are captured by a frigate commanded by Monsieur de Champignon. The humor of the piece consists in the antics of Champignon, a typical stage Frenchman, and his complete inability to cope with Oclabber and Maclaymore, an Irishman and Scotsman in the French service. The climax of the fun is reached when Block, an English sailor, discovers the Frenchman's pocket glass, rouge, and Spanish wool, with which he daubs his face. Eventually the French frigate is overtaken by an English man-of-war, Champignon strikes his colors, and the play ends with a rousing drinking song. At the first performance the cast included Woodward, Yates, Palmer, Johnston and Miss Macklin. Woodward, who played the part of Block, was one of the few actors to escape Churchill's censure in *The Rosciad*. He achieved a certain distinction by humiliating Sir John Hill, the "Actor, Inspector, Doctor, Botanist," who having failed as a playwright undertook to insult the whole acting profession. *The Reprisal* was revived in 1763 and also given in Edinburgh and the provinces. On October 21, 1777, it was given at Covent-Garden with Quick as Block and Wewitzer as Champignon. On April 24, 1793, at the same house, Macready the elder played Oclabber, and on April 23, 1801, also at Covent Garden, the great Joseph Munden, commemorated by Charles Lamb, condescended to play the

part of Block.²⁶ In Arthur Murphy's *Life of Garrick*,²⁷ the play is described as having met with tolerable success. Like everything Smollett wrote it has a certain vigor about it, but any piece written with the one idea of setting the galleries in a roar is hardly likely to arrest the attention of posterity. Garrick, as will be seen by his letter to Smollett, behaved very handsomely.²⁸

At the time *The Reprisal* was acted, Drury Lane when full was "a £220 house." Presumably Smollett cleared about £150. To the harassed editor of the *Critical Review* such a sum must have been more than welcome.

As a novelist, a compiler, translator, historian, and dramatist Smollett had met with at least his fair share of criticism. In the year 1756 he accepted the editorship of the *Critical Review*, a task which a man of his sensitive yet pugnacious character should never have undertaken. It gave him the opportunity of judging others as he himself had been judged, but it also involved him in controversies that cost him his health and his peace of mind. Even as early as 1758, when he had been editor less than

²⁶ The Works of Tobias Smollett, edited by W. E. Henley, London, 1901, Vol. 12.

²⁷ London, 1801, Vol. II, p. 120.

²⁸

November 26, 1757.

Sir, There was a mistake made by our office-keepers to your prejudice, which has given me much uneasiness. Though the expence of our theatre every night amounts to ninety pounds and upwards, yet we take no more from gentlemen, who write for the theatre, and who produce an original performance, than sixty guineas; they who alter only an old play pay 80 guineas for the expence, as in the instance of *Amphitryon*. This occasioned the mistake which I did not discover till lately. Though it is very reasonable to take four score pounds for the expence of the house, yet as we have not yet regulated this matter, I cannot possibly agree that Dr. Smollett shall be the first precedent. I have enclosed a draught upon Mr. Clutterbuck for the sum due to you.

I am, most sincerely,

Your most obedient humble servant,

D. Garrick.

three years, he writes to his friend Dr. John Moore,²⁹ "I wish to God my circumstances would allow me to consign my pen to oblivion. I really believe that mankind grow every day more malicious." A man in that frame of mind had better not set forth on the rocky road of Journalism.

²⁹ Dr. John Moore, Smollett's friend and first biographer, was one of the many literary doctors of the eighteenth century. He was the author of the once popular romance *Zeluco*. In 1769 he accompanied Douglas, Duke of Hamilton, on his travels, of which he has left pleasant accounts in his *View of Society and Manners in France* (2 vols., 1779), and *In Italy* (2 vols., 1781). His son was the celebrated Sir John Moore of Corunna fame. For an account of his life and writings, see R. Anderson's edition of Dr. Moore, 7 vols., Edinburgh, 1820.

CHAPTER II

SMOLLETT THE JOURNALIST

It is perhaps significant of the lowly place of criticism in English literature that the first two literary Reviews which can be said to have succeeded should have begun life with a strong political bias. The *Monthly Review*, founded by Dr. Ralph Griffiths in 1749, was conducted by Whigs on Whig principles. Seven years later a Scotsman, named Archibald Hamilton, entered the lists against Griffiths with his *Critical Review*. He persuaded Smollett, a brother Scot, to become chief editor and aided by a Society of Gentlemen they implanted the Tory standard in English literary criticism. The parallel with the *Edinburgh* and the *Quarterly* is too obvious to be insisted upon. The rôle of editor was not as dignified as it was to become later in the heyday of Jeffrey and Gifford, but the theory that the excellence of an author depended upon his political leanings found its first consistent expression in the monthly criticisms of Griffiths and Smollett.

Lovers of Boswell will remember that during Dr. Johnson's celebrated interview with his Majesty George III in 1767 the conversation touched among other things upon the respective merits of the *Monthly* and *Critical Reviews*. In answer to the King's question as to which was the better, Johnson remarked that "the *Monthly Review* was done with most care, the *Critical* upon the best principles;" adding that the authors of the *Monthly Review* were ene-

mies to the Church." This, records Boswell with admirable gravity, "the King said he was sorry to hear." Ten years later the Great Cham of Literature had occasion to return to the subject. "The Monthly Reviewers are for supporting the constitution both in church and state. The Critical Reviewers, I believe, often review without reading the books through; but lay hold of a topick and write chiefly from their own minds. (They admitted as much themselves. C. R. VI, 438.) The Monthly Reviewers are duller men, and are glad to read the books through."

Smollett had been dead five years at the time of this observation, but it may be quoted as representing the most intelligent contemporary judgment upon the type of criticism for which he was responsible. There are, of course, many other comments in the literature of the period on the merits and shortcomings of the two Reviews. In his *Enquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe*, Goldsmith castigated them both impartially.¹ "We have two literary reviews in London, with critical newspapers and magazines without number. The compilers of these resemble the commoners of Rome; they are all for leveling property, not by increasing their own, but by diminishing that of others." And again, "Were these Monthly Reviews and Magazines frothy, pert or absurd, they might find some pardon, but to be dull and dronish is an encroachment on the prerogative of a folio."

(Goldsmith having experienced the indignity of sweated labor could hardly be expected to entertain an exalted view of literary criticism. Compelled by sheer privation he agreed to work for Ralph Griffiths, editor of the *Monthly Review*, in return for board and lodging and a "small salary." But what was even more bitter, he had to submit to the correction of all his manuscripts by Mrs.

¹ Goldsmith *Enquiry*, ch. XI.

Griffiths, the wife of his employer. *The Enquiry* was published in 1759 at a time when Goldsmith was vacillating between Smollett and Griffiths. Smollett, always painfully sensitive to criticism himself, though quite prepared to ride rough-shod over the feelings of others, complained that Goldsmith had indiscriminately censured the two reviews, "confounding a work undertaken from public spirit with one supported for the sordid purposes of a bookseller."²

The editors of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, fearing perhaps that the *Critical Review* might deprive them of some circulation, were equally uncomplimentary.³ The authors, it hears, "are said to be gentlemen . . . the manner in which their work is executed shows that they either did not know what should be done, or were not able to do it."

An anonymous pamphlet, entitled *The Battle of the Reviews*, indicates that literary criticism was no more popular among authors two hundred years ago than it is to-day.⁴ The pamphleteer addressing himself to the authors and booksellers of Great Britain and Ireland professes to be "bent upon striking off all the Heads of our Hydra of Modern criticism, till the Monster is extinguished, or learns more sense and better Manners." After holding up to ridicule the "dull and mean and bare and starvling and wretched Performances" of Reheboam Gruffy, Esq., meaning Griffiths, he proceeds to satirize Smollett under the name of Sawney MacSmallhead. "Sawney's merit, such as it is, is quite tarnished by his Vanity, a Vanity always fulsome and odious." Following a caustic and occasionally witty description of the Protagonists comes an account of the battle between the two

² C. R. VII: 372.

³ G. M. XXVI: 141.

⁴ *Battle of the Reviews*, London. Printed for R. Marriner, in *The Strand*. No date. B. M. catalogue has (1760?).

reviews, evidently imitated from Swift's *Battle of the Books*. While the Monthly Reviewers are driven from the field, "MacSmallhead" himself is captured by Admiral Knowles's stout tars and clapped into the King's Bench Prison.⁵

The general appearance of the *Critical* was not unlike that of the *Monthly*. The *Critical* purported to be written by a "Society of Gentlemen," whereas the *Monthly* claimed only to be the work of Several Hands. The *Monthly* labored under the further disadvantage of being printed at the sign of the Dunciad, which afforded its adversaries a rather obvious line of attack. An examination of the first issues of the two reviews suggests that the *Critical* was directed by a man of wider intellectual range than the *Monthly*. In May and June, 1749, Griffiths reviews the following works: Grove's *A System of Moral Philosophy*, a *Treatise on the Senses* by Monsieur le Cat, a translation of Pindar's Odes by Pitt's friend Gilbert West, Bolinbroke's Letters, an anonymous epic poem entitled *Gideon*,⁶ an Essay on Design by a Mr. J. Gwyn, a translation of a French pamphlet, *Man a Machine*, by the Marquis D'Argens, a book of Sermons, a French magazine called *Magazine de Londres*, in which Griffiths may have had some interest as it was printed for him at the Dunciad, and Smollett's stilted tragedy *The Regicide*. This last, by the way, was very cordially reviewed, proving that in 1749 at any rate Griffiths and Smollett were on excellent terms.

⁵ Referring to the Admiral's suit against Smollett for defamation of character. As a result of this suit Smollett had to pay a fine of £100 and spend three months in prison.

⁶ The anonymous epic poem *Gideon* was actually written by Aaron Hill. John Gwyn (Gwynn or Gwynne) was a well-known architect, and a writer on architectural subjects. His *Essay on Design* included proposals for erecting a public academy. He was a member of the original committee formed for creating the Royal Academy.

The *Critical Review* for January and February, 1756, wandered further afield. It contained seventeen articles including reviews of Voltaire's *Pucelle*, Crébillon's *La Nuit et Moment, ou les Matines de Cythère*, a medical treatise, a history of the Scilly Islands, plays by Murphy and Foote, an anonymous novel called the *Fortune-teller*, and an article on *Recent Performances in Painting and Sculpture*. A special feature of the *Critical* mentioned in the introductory puff to the first volume was its correspondence with Paris, Rome, Lucca, Florence, Berlin and The Hague. Though this correspondence was not always forthcoming, the mere intention proves that Smollett's conception of a literary magazine was by no means provincial.

The chief difference in the conduct of the two reviews was that Griffiths aroused less antagonism than Smollett. Soon they came to reviewing the same books, the same pamphlets and the same plays, but while Griffiths managed to steer moderately clear of controversy Smollett was almost continuously involved in quarrels. One of the first to fall foul of the *Critical Review* was John Shebbeare, a professional troublemaker for the Government, of whom Horace Walpole said that he was "determined to write himself into a post or into the pillory." Shebbeare had first come into notice by his attack on the Duke of Newcastle in the form of *Letters on the English Nation*, published under the pseudonym of *Batista Angeloni, a Jesuit resident in London*. These were followed by a series of *Letters to the People of England*, in which Shebbeare undertook to prove that the House of Hanover was responsible for all their woes. After the publication of the seventh letter, in 1758, Shebbeare was arrested, tried, and sentenced to a fine and three years' imprisonment. After emerging from prison Shebbeare changed his tactics and

devoted himself to the Court, even going so far as to attack his old hero, Pitt, for which abject tergiversation he was granted a pension of 400 pounds. Dr. Johnson, another man to profit by royal generosity, found his name being bandied about with Shebbeare's. Wilkes linked them together as "the two famous doctors who were the state hirelings called pensioners," while another wag insisted that the King had seen fit to reward only a He-bear and a She-bear.

In the first number of the *Critical*, Smollett reviewed the *Third Letter to the People of England* unfavorably,⁷ remarking quite justly that Shebbeare's production did not breathe the language of "sincerity and true patriotism but the raving of spleen and disappointment." Shebbeare replied with a vicious pamphlet entitled *The Occasional Critic or the Decrees of the Scotch Tribunal in the Critical Review Rejudged*. The *Occasional Critic* is not in itself a noteworthy piece of writing, but it is interesting for our purposes as representing the type of controversy in which Smollett was destined to find himself constantly embroiled. The fact that Smollett happened to be a Scotsman was a convenient springboard into the usual slough of scurrility. Shebbeare made the most of it. Since the 'Forty-five Scotland had become more than ever a legitimate target for ridicule. We all know how Johnson teased poor Bozzy for being a Scotsman, and while Johnson was, of course, playful, Shebbeare and others of his ilk meant to make their victims wince. Shebbeare sneers at Smollett for having been a surgeon's mate on board a ship in the expedition to Cartagena. He cites Smollett's *History of England*, and his *Compendium of Voyages* to prove him a "Hackney Writer," and if these are not sufficient to sustain the charge he pretends that the *Treatise on Mid-*

⁷ C. R. I:88.

wifery to which the celebrated accoucheur, Dr. Smellie, modestly put his name, was really the handiwork of Smollett. He takes a fling at the unlucky *Regicide*, which had already cost its author such heartburnings. "The Reegiceede," says Shebbeare, "is a Tragedy, written by one of the Gentlemen Annalists, never played, sometime published, totally forgotten, which, before its being printed by Subscription, raised a great Clamor against the Patten-tees, who rejected it and on being published justified their Refusal." Finally, he concludes with a general condemnation of the whole *Review*, taking up each article in the first number and expatiating upon the ignorance displayed.

Smollett was constitutionally incapable of ignoring an adversary. Shebbeare himself was not more restive under criticism. The reply to the *Occasional Critic* opens with a contemptuous reference to Shebbeare's gibes at Scotland.⁸ Incidentally, Smollett remarks that of the five persons on the staff of the *Critical Review* only one is a Scotsman. This would seem to indicate that 'Archibald Hamilton, the proprietor of the review, was not a regular contributor.'⁹ After disposing of the imputations against Scotland with unusual restraint Smollett reverts to his usual vein of hard-hitting invective. Shebbeare is branded as "an ignorant and presumptuous quack in politics, an enemy to his king and country, and a desperate incendiary." The further charge of ignorance of the classics, which Shebbeare had made against him and which was reiterated later on by Dr. Grainger, is answered in great

⁸ C. R. IV:333.

⁹ In C. R. XI, p. 411, Smollett implies that Hamilton never wrote for the *Review* at all. Of Hamilton's literary qualifications there seems to have been some doubt. Foote observed to some one who praised him as a well-read man. "I grant you he reads a great many proofs but they are no great proofs of his reading." He was also satirized in *The Race*, a poem by Cuthbert Shaw.

detail. No doubt Smollett's Latin and Greek were not unimpeachable. If we may judge by his French and Spanish translations he had a natural gift for languages, but it was the "flair" of an all-round man of letters rather than the painstaking accuracy of a scholar.

The controversy was not allowed to lapse even after these expressions of mutual contempt. Shebbeare's *Appendix to the Occasional Critic* was if possible more bitter and scurrilous than its predecessor. This time he attacked both the *Monthly* and the *Critical*. The following advertisement inserted in this pamphlet for Smollett's benefit is typical of the literary amenities of the eighteenth century:

Chelsea, Nov. 26, 1757.

To be lett and entered upon immediately

An empty Author.

He is equally qualified to write tragedy, comedy, farce, history, novels, voyages, treatises on midwifery, on physie, and on all kinds of polite letters. . . . He will undertake to praise all works be they never so bad . . . in the *Critical Review*, for very small gratuities. . . . Besides himself he has under him several journeymen-authors, so that all those who chose to have a subject fitted up may be commodiously furnished at his house.

Smollett contented himself with a brief notice of this effusion to the effect that Shebbeare's ascription of some animadversions on the *Occasional Critic's* translation of Polybius to a gentleman of the University of Cambridge was a "Lye."¹⁰ Though Shebbeare does not figure again in the *Critical Review*, the character of Ferret, the Government spy in *Launcelot Greaves*, indicates that he was still lurking in the back of Smollett's mind. A further reference is to be found in the *History*, where Smollett, anxious apparently to liquidate all his old enmities speaks of Shebbeare as "that good man!"

¹⁰ C. R. IV: 552.

One of the results of the *Occasional Critic* was to accentuate the bitterness between Griffiths and Smollett. We have already seen that Griffiths was at one time well disposed towards Smollett, even to the extent of calling the *Regicide* one of the best theatrical pieces that has appeared these many years." It was inevitable, however, that sooner or later the two rivals should fall out. In March, 1756, when the *Critical* was hardly three months old, Smollett announced truculently, and as it subsequently, appeared very untruthfully, that the editors would not "stoop so far beneath themselves, as to maintain dispute or altercation with any low-bred, pedantic Syntax-monger, retained as a servant or associate by any bookseller, or bookseller's wife, who may have an interest in decrying their performance."¹¹ This thrust, obviously directed at Griffiths, was entirely unprovoked. We can only say that Smollett's well-known antipathy to booksellers was for the moment concentrated on the editor of a rival publication. The following extract from a review of Rolt's *History of South America*, might well have ruffled a calmer temperament than Griffiths'! "The British learning of this age is grown into contempt among other nations, by whom it was formerly revered; and nothing has contributed to this disgrace, so much as the inundation of mean performances, undertaken for the emolument of booksellers, who cannot distinguish authors of merit, or if they could, have not sense and spirit to reward them according to their genius and capacity."¹² A year later when Griffiths had occasion to review *The Occasional Critic*, he went out of his way to state the case for booksellers versus authors.¹³ "Such mean, envious and illiberal Competitors (Smollett

¹¹ C. R. I: 288.

¹² C. R. I: 97.

¹³ M. R. XVII: 373.

and Shebbeare) have brought Letters into disgrace; and have made the name of Author so disreputable that we have seen men of genius and merit creep into a Bookseller's shop with as much caution and secrecy as a married man would steal into a brothel." In a competition of sheer "Billingsgate" Smollett could hold his own with anybody. Griffiths' slur elicited a quick response in the shape of a three-page diatribe against "The Old Gentlewoman who directs the *Monthly Review*."¹⁴ This attack on Griffiths via his wife was sufficient in itself to have put an end to any semblance of friendliness, but there was much besides this to fan the flames of controversy.

One of the leading contributors to the *Monthly* was Dr. James Grainger, author of *The Sugar-Cane*, a didactic poem that Johnson considered ridiculous. "What could he make of a sugar-cane?" said Johnson. "One might as well write *The Parsley-Bed, a Poem*, or *The Cabbage Garden, a Poem*." For the moment, however, we are not concerned with the *Sugar-Cane* but with Dr. Grainger's translation of Tibullus. Smollett scored this translation with unnecessary severity calling it a "huge farrago of learned lumber, jumbled together to very little purpose, seemingly calculated to display the translator's reading rather than to illustrate the sense and beauty of the original."¹⁵ After poking fun at Dr. Grainger's inept comments on the life of the poet he proceeds to censure his versification and choice of words. It is remarkable how eager Smollett and his adversaries always were to pounce upon solecisms and so-called vulgarity of diction. *The Gentleman's Magazine* had gravely censured the *Critical* on its first appearance for using the contraction "it's" instead of "it is." In the same way Smollett takes

¹⁴ C. R. IV:469.

¹⁵ C. R. VI:475.

Grainger to task for his barbarous vocabulary. The adjective "noiseless" is condemned as an ugly new word, "redoubtable" as being too French and "feud" too Scotch for polite usage. Grainger lost no time in vindicating himself. In an open letter addressed to Tobias Smollett he clears himself completely of all the definite charges brought forward by the *Critical Review*. In defense of the derided line "the floor tread noiseless, noiseless turn the key," he cites the precedent of Shakespeare, Dryden and Gray, proving that the objectionable word was a novelty only to Smollett. For the rest, he recommends him to consult Johnson's Dictionary before undertaking any further criticism. We can imagine Smollett's fury at being referred to the Dictionary. A man of his independence would have recognized the authority of no lexicographer, certainly not Johnson's with whom we know from the famous letter to Wilkes he was never on particularly cordial terms (see Appendix). Grainger was no more content to answer a criticism and let it go at that than Smollett himself would have been under similar circumstances. Accordingly, he jeers at Smollett, as Shebbeare had done, for the assistance he was supposed to have given Dr. Smellie in the writing of a treatise on midwifery. Why this should be a matter of reproach it is difficult to understand, but apparently, if we may judge by Tristram Shandy, the eighteenth century regarded a "man midwife" as a figure of pure comedy.¹⁶ Smollett was probably far more nettled by Grainger's familiar use of his Christian name. Inasmuch as he never signed himself "Tobias" and never allowed "Tobias" to appear on the title page of his books,

¹⁶ See such pamphlets as *Man-Midwifery analyzed and the tendency of that practice detected and exposed* by Philip Thicknesse, also *Danger and Immodesty of unnecessarily employing Men-Midwives*, Anonymous. London, 1772.

it would seem that he was self-conscious about the name and wished to conceal it. At any rate, Grainger reiterates "Tobias" and "my dear Toby" with evident relish. A more vicious thrust was the insinuation that Smollett's criticisms were dictated by the state of his purse; in other words, that he must be venal because he wrote for his living. It happened that the same number which damned Grainger's *Tibullus* contained a very complimentary review of a translation of *Ariosto* by a Mr. Hutchins. Probably this gentleman had entertained Smollett, for Grainger after commenting on the wretchedness of his performance, remarks that unfortunately "the translator of *Tibullus* has no country seat some fifty miles from London; and if he had one, has been accustomed to too good company, ever to dream of entertaining with claret and venison, such Authorlings as you know, in their Summer and Holiday Excursions."

The *Critical Review* rebuttal, extending to sixteen pages, was probably not written by Smollett.¹⁷ Though far from urbane, it lacks the headlong intemperance that usually characterizes his polemical efforts. The constant repetition of his name and the handsome compliments paid to *Peregrine Pickle* would seem to indicate that this reply was penned by another hand. Furthermore, during the very month that this notice on Grainger appeared, Smollett was already engaged in a far more serious controversy. Admiral Knowles, of whom we shall have occasion to speak later, had threatened the *Critical Review* with a libel suit and it may well be that Smollett was willing enough to leave the chastisement of Dr. Grainger to some underling. The reviewer, whoever he was, extricated himself from Smollett's mistakes with considerable ingenuity. As for the inaccuracies in the original review, of which Dr. Grain-

¹⁷ C. R. VII:141-158.

ger complained, he disposes of them with the perennial excuse of all journalists. "Remember," he says, "that as your great oracle Dr. Johnson, the dictionary-writer, has been caught tripping more than once, even when deliberately walking in his own beaten path; we in the hurry of a monthly publication, may sometimes stumble, without incurring the imputation of ignorance and presumption." Since the inception of journalism was there ever a blunder in newspaper or magazine that could not be explained by the driving urgency of hurried publication?

If Grainger on the whole vindicates his translation against the slurs of the *Critical*, there is at least one respect in which Smollett emerges as the better man of the two. The charge of "writing by the hour-glass for his daily bread" is willingly acknowledged. Grainger's accusation seems to us so inconceivably snobbish as to be merely ridiculous, but in the eighteenth century when the words "author" and "gentleman" were usually held to be incompatible it is always refreshing to find a Johnson or a Smollett standing up for the dignity of letters. When we remember that Smollett practically kept open house and that Grainger himself had been entertained at his table, the reproach appears even more contemptible.

The reviewer proceeds in the vigorous *tu quoque* strain that appears to have been Smollett's habitual method of conducting an argument. If Smollett is guilty of a few "high flavored jokes," what is there to be said of Dr. Grainger's modesty. Unlike certain other publications "*The Critical Review* is not written by a parcel of obscure hirelings under the restraint of a bookseller and his wife, who presume to revise, alter and amend the articles occasionally. The principal writers in *The Critical Review* are unconnected with booksellers, unawed by old women and independent of each other."

It is perhaps needless to remark that the *Monthly Review* bestowed a verdict in favor of its own contributor. Smollett, indeed, had made doubly sure of their enmity by his preliminary notice of Grainger's letter. "Whereas one of the owls belonging to the proprietor of the M--thly R----w, which answers to the name of Grainger, hath suddenly broke from his mew, where he used to hoot in darkness and peace, and now screeches openly in the face of day, we shall take the first opportunity to chastise this troublesome owl, and drive him back to his original obscurity."¹⁸ The Monthly Reviewers, always less truculently inclined than their rivals, contented themselves with a short notice to the effect that Dr. Grainger had "fully obviated the censures of his antagonist."

Almost simultaneously with Grainger another author rushed into print complaining of rough treatment at the hands of Dr. Sm--ll--t. This time it was Joseph Reed, a rope-maker by profession, who beguiled his spare hours by writing indifferent plays. "I never did the man an injury," lamented Johnson, "but he would read his tragedy to me." Reed also tried his hand at farces and it was one of these, *Madrigal and Truletta* by name, which elicited a rather condescending notice from the *Critical Review*. *Madrigal and Truletta*, styled by the author a mock-tragedy, is not without occasional gleams of humor, but according to the *Critical Review* "parody and burlesque, tho' ever so well executed, have very little merit in them." To write a tragedy by the simple method of culling bombastic passages from Shakespeare, Rowe, Otway, Aaron Hill and Smollett is certainly not a difficult task. Reed further embellished his farce with notes, in one of which he refers to a certain passage in Smollett's *Regi-*

¹⁸ C. R. VII:88.

cide as "bordering on the tipperarian idiom." That unfortunate tragedy to which Smollett clung with all the devotion of a mother to a backward child was responsible for many ill-natured jests at his expense. *Madrigal and Truletta* borrowed seven more or less ridiculous extracts from it, though without attempting to pillory Smollett in particular. Evidently our play-writing rope-maker was painfully sensitive to criticism or he would hardly have noticed the comment in the *Critical Review*. His pamphlet in answer, entitled *A Sop in Pan for a Physical Critick*, contends that Smollett was unjust in that he did not mention the notes, on which the humor of his play depended. It was an argument which might easily have been picked to pieces, but for once in his life Smollett allowed an incipient quarrel to die of inanition.

A more serious foeman than Joseph Reed or than the drudges employed by Griffiths was now to fall foul of the *Critical Review*. In May, 1758, Smollett delivered a slashing attack on Admiral Knowles for his conduct in the abortive expedition against Rochefort.¹⁹ In the course of this review he remarked that Knowles was "an admiral without resolution and a man without veracity . . . that in every station of life he has played the tyrant with his inferiors, the incendiary among his equals and commanded a squadron occasionally for twenty years, without having even established his reputation in the article of personal courage."²⁰ Hannay's *Life of Smollett* maintains that

¹⁹ C. R. V:438.

²⁰ In the Cartagena Expedition Admiral Sir Charles Knowles, as he subsequently became, was captain of the *Weymouth* in Sir Chaloner Ogle's squadron. He appears to have acted in the capacity of engineer and surveyor for the whole fleet. In 1746 he was appointed Governor of Louisbourg, and in 1747 Commander-in-Chief at Jamaica. In the following year after engaging some Spanish ships rather ineffectively, he wrote home to Anson, then First Lord of the Admiralty, referring to the bashfulness of his subordinates in

modern generals have put up with much worse than this from correspondents actually in camp, but the censorship in the Great War hardly corroborates his opinion. At all events, Knowles felt himself aggrieved.

The Rochefort expedition was undoubtedly mismanaged. Pitt had just come into power and, anxious to relieve the pressure on the armies of the Duke of Cumberland and the King of Prussia, he determined on a secret expedition against the coast of France. Information from spies led him to suppose that the fortress and arsenal of Rochefort at the mouth of the Charente were comparatively unprotected. Accordingly, early in September, 1757, a squadron set sail from Spithead under sealed orders. The land forces were commanded by Sir John Mordaunt, a nephew of Peterborough, who had won a reputation as a soldier which was not substantiated in this campaign. Neither did his colleague Lord Hawke, the future victor of Quiberon Bay, give any indication of his latent talents on this occasion.²¹ Like so many expeditions demanding the co-operation of the army and navy it failed through lack of concerted action. Smollett himself knew something of the dangers of divided responsibility from his experience at the attack of Cartagena, where what promised so brilliantly was ruined by the jealousy of Vernon and Wentworth. Almost the same conditions were reproduced at Rochefort. Admiral Knowles, Hawke's second in com-

the face of the enemy. As Governor of Jamaica in 1752-1756, he was extremely unpopular, charges of his illegal, cruel and arbitrary conduct being laid before the Assembly. After the Rochefort expedition 1757, he held no further active command in the British navy. In 1770 he accepted a post of administration in the Russian navy. He died in 1777.

²¹ One of the few officers to distinguish himself at Rochefort was Colonel Wolfe. It was characteristic of Pitt that he should have remembered the ability of this obscure colonel when he had need of an exceptional commander for the Quebec expedition.

mand, excused himself for not bombarding Fort Fourras on the grounds that the channel was too shallow to permit of his ships getting within range. It is curious to note that Smollett had raised the same question in his *Account of the Expedition against Cartagena*, where he speaks of Knowles, at that time a captain commanding the *Weymouth*, as "a man who piqued himself upon being an able engineer, and in the confidence of his own capacity expended a good number of shells to the amusement of the enemy."

Mordaunt finally decided to give up the attack and sailed home, confident that if any one were blamed for the failure it would be Pitt rather than himself. The recent execution of Admiral Byng, however, had given the country a taste for court-martials. Although Mordaunt was eventually cleared, public opinion against him remained unaltered. Among the crop of pamphlets engendered by his trial was the one by Knowles, to which Smollett took such virulent exception. Knowles immediately brought action against Archibald Hamilton, whose name appeared on the title page of the *Review*, with the intention of discovering the author²² of the offensive article and then demanding of him the satisfaction of a gentleman. Now Smollett was the last person in the world to allow another man to shoulder his quarrel. Failing in his appeal to Wilkes to mollify Knowles, and if Wilkes ever showed Smollett's jingoistic letter to the admiral we can understand why it failed, he came forward in court and acknowledged himself the author.²³ What must have been his surprise when Knowles, instead of challenging him as he had promised, clung to

²² The first four volumes appeared with the name of the printer, R. Baldwin, on the title page. Beginning with Vol. 5, A. Hamilton takes Baldwin's place.

²³ See Smollett's letters to Wilkes in Appendix.

the law as a safer medium of controversy. As we have already seen, the verdict was given against Smollett and he was compelled to pay a fine of one hundred pounds and spend three months in prison. Perhaps Knowles had lost his taste for dueling after receiving challenges from four of his subordinates whom he had accused of "bashfulness in the face of the enemy." Sir Walter Scott, who was perhaps influenced by Dr. Moore, Smollett's earliest biographer, had no illusions about Knowles. "How the Admiral," he says, "reconciled his conduct to the rules usually observed by gentlemen we are not informed; but the proceeding seems to justify even Smollett's strength of expression, when he terms him 'an officer without resolution, and a man without veracity.'"²⁴

Smollett's active participation in the *Critical Review* came to an end shortly after his release from prison. This probably occurred in the winter of 1759-60. In a letter to Garrick dated Chelsea, April 5, 1761, he says, "I have been so hurried since my enlargement that I had not time to write one article in the *Critical Review*, except that upon Bower's History, and perhaps I shall not write another these six months." The article to which Smollett refers is a review of the fifth volume of Bower's *History of the Popes*. It appeared in the March number of the *Critical Review*, 1761. An earlier volume of the same work had been noticed in January, 1759, but, as Smollett was still hoping to get the case dropped at that time, the review mentioned in the letter to Garrick must be the later one. Unfortunately the exact date of his imprisonment cannot be determined.²⁵ In the preface to the volume of

²⁴ Knowles is again mentioned in *The Critical Review*, VII:554.

²⁵ The case is listed among those decided during the Hilary Term of the first year of George III. This would suggest that Smollett was in prison during the spring of 1760. Cf. Blackstone's Reports of Cases from 1746-1779. London, 1828. *The King v. Dr. Smol-*

the *Review* for 1761, Smollett asserts that he is continually being attacked for articles he did not write. Even in the first years of its publication when he undoubtedly wrote the greater part of the *Review* himself, he continually found himself in the awkward position of having to explain to some indignant author that he was not personally responsible for every note of censure. Anderson's *Life of Smollett* (Edinburgh, 1820, p. 173) contains a very courteous letter of apology to Richardson for a review of *Clarissa Harlowe* to which Smollett thought the author might possibly have taken exception. Among the other unfavorable criticisms for which he disclaimed responsibility were the reviews of Home's *Douglas*, a tragedy which achieved an unaccountable popularity, and Wilkie's *Epigoniad*. On the appearance of a second edition of the *Epigoniad* David Hume wrote a conciliatory letter to the *Critical Review*, suggesting that the authors had inadvertently overlooked its conspicuous merits. It was also Hume who credited the author of *Douglas* with the "true theatric genius of Shakespeare and Otway, refined from the unhappy barbarisms of the one and the licentiousness of the other."

We can well understand Smollett's exasperation at being, as he said,²⁶ "insulted in private abuse, and traduced in private calumny, by obscure authors whom he did not know, for criticisms he had not written on perform-

lett. "The defendant was a nominal physician, in the booksellers' pay, and was convicted on an information, for writing a libel against Admiral Knowles, in the *Critical Review*. He declared his sorrow for his offence, that he had offered the Admiral reasonable satisfaction, which was refused; and was now ready to do as the Court should think proper. The Court (absente Foster, J) fined him 100 pounds, imprisoned him for three months, and ordered him to find security for the good behaviour for seven years, himself in 500 pounds and two sureties 250 pounds each. And Lord Mansfield, C. J. added, that his submission had had its effect with the Court."

²⁶ C. R. XI:Preface.

ances which he never saw." Up till 1761, he could at least comfort himself with the reflection that the authors who had publicly resented his strictures were for the most part comparatively small fry. In that year, however, he collided, unintentionally but none the less disastrously, with one of the greatest masters of satire in English literature. Charles Churchill, renegade priest and boon companion of John Wilkes, had just published anonymously his *Rosciad*, an attack upon the actors and actresses of the day, which scored an instantaneous success. Unlike its more cautious rival, the *Monthly*, the *Critical Review* proceeded to chasten the anonymous author without waiting to hear the verdict of the town. The notice was by no means wholly unfavorable, but it did rally to the support of the actors so pitilessly satirized, and it did caution the poet "to put less gall in his ink."²⁷ Incidentally, it made a bad guess when it named Lloyd as the probable author. The reason for this guess was obvious enough. Robert Lloyd, one of the contributors to the *Connoisseur*, the most sprightly of the numerous successors to the *Spectator*, had written a poem not long before, called the *Actor*, in which he censured certain affectations to which the stage had become addicted. The *Critical Review*, preening itself on its literary acumen remarked that "these Connoisseurs in writing little conceive how easily they are discovered by a veteran in the service." Lloyd, a great friend of Churchill, disclaimed all connection with the *Rosciad*, while Churchill himself, delighted with the unexpected publicity fanned the flames with his *Apology, addressed to the Critical Reviewers*. The principal targets for satire were Smollett and Hamilton, but Churchill took the opportunity to lay about him once more among the actors, including

²⁷ C. R. XI:209.

even Garrick, who had escaped censure in the *Rosciad*. Possibly Churchill suspected Garrick of inspiring some of the "Churchilliads," "Anti-Rosciads," etc., that had already begun to spring up in his wake. Evidently the great actor felt the force of Churchill's sarcasm, for he immediately wrote to Lloyd begging him to exercise a soothing influence over his irascible friend.²⁸

Poor Smollett was harried on every side. Whether or not Churchill believed him to be the author of the patronizing review, actually he had no hand in it. After five years of incessant bickering he was, temporarily at least, sick of controversy. The success of a satirist, however, depends upon the timeliness of his satire and Churchill was astute enough to perceive that the time was ripe for an onslaught upon the Critics. Having cowed the actors into submission he decided that he might further entrench himself in the public esteem by chastising the most vigorous and dogmatic of self-appointed literary censors. The *Regicide*, as always, offered infinite scope for ridicule:

Who ever read the *Regicide*, but swore
 The author wrote as man ne'er wrote before?
 Others for plots and under-plots may call,
 Here's the right method—have no plot at all.
 Who can so often in his cause engage
 The tiny pathos of the Grecian stage,
 Whilst honors rise, the tears spontaneous flow
 At tragic Ha! and no less tragic Oh!
 To praise his nervous weakness all agree,
 And then for sweetness who so sweet as he!
 Too big for utterance when sorrows swell,
 The too big sorrows flowing tears must tell;
 But when those flowing tears shall cease to flow,
 Why—then the voice must speak again, you know.
Apology, lines 156-170.

²⁸ Ch. Churchill; Poetical Works, Aldine edition, Vol. 1, p. 61.

Churchill also attacks Smollett, much as Pope had attacked Addison, under a veneer of respect.

What had I done, that angry heaven should send
The bitterest foe where most I wished a friend.
Apology, lines 146-147.

He condemns the authors of the *Critical Review* for protecting themselves by anonymity, for deliberately manufacturing slanders, and for traducing even their own friends. No wonder that Smollett felt compelled to vindicate himself after such a bitter arraignment.²⁹ In his notice on the *Apology* he maintains that Churchill had not substantiated a single charge against him.³⁰ Furthermore, and this is characteristic of Smollett, he asserts and obviously believes that he has erred on the side of lenity rather than harshness. No doubt he was unaware of the bad temper frequently displayed in the *Critical Review*. It is only unfortunate that he never attained the degree of imperviousness that he expected as a matter of course from others. In this respect Griffiths of the *Monthly* was more fitted to be an editor than Smollett. Without truckling to the mob he was quicker to sight a danger signal, as for instance, in his review of the *Apology*, in which he declined to champion either adversary.

Two minor attacks on the *Critical Review* during Smollett's regime remain to be considered. In one of them,

²⁹ C. R. XI:409.

³⁰ Smollett and Churchill kept up their feud until Churchill's death in 1764 put an end to it. In the *Critical Review*, XII, p. 319, Smollett returns to the charge again. "Long life," he says, "and redundancy of carrion, to this least of staunch hounds, the ravenous C-----ll (Churchill), the yelping C-----n (Colman), and the howling L---d (Lloyd)." *The Briton* is full of abusive references to Churchill, cf. especially No. 13.

Churchill again attacked Smollett in *The Author* (lines 107-122) published November, 1763.

A Scrutiny: or the Criticks criticis'd, an anonymous pamphleteer undertook a laborious refutation in sixty-eight pages of a review on a didactic poem, entitled *Epistles, Philosophical and Moral*. Smollett, or one of his underlings, wrote a blustering reply, in which he told the author virtually to mind his own business.³¹ The other is more interesting in that it deals with that wonderful letter-writer and exquisite snob, Horace Walpole. His *Catalogue of the Royal and Noble Authors of England*, had been severely handled by the *Critical Review* for its excessive Whiggism.³² Not only did Walpole vilify Mary Queen of Scots and Charles the First, which offended Smollett's sense of historical justice, but being a good son he attempted to portray his father as the incarnation of political honor. This was too much for Smollett to stomach; his review without being particularly brutal was certainly no more tempered than usual. Some one, who was proud to call himself a friend of Walpole's, took up the cudgels on his behalf and reprimanded Smollett, under the name of Draw-can-sir, for the acrimony of his remarks. The pamphlet itself was of no particular importance and Smollett did not deign to reply.³³

From the account so far given of the various controversies, in which Smollett was directly or indirectly in-

³¹ C. R. VII:160.

³² C. R. VI:483.

³³ The title of this pamphlet is *Observations on the Account Given of the Catalogue of the Royal and Noble Authors of England in the Critical Review for December 1758*.

In this connection cf. also Horace Walpole's Letters, edited by Peter Cunningham. Edinburgh 1906. Vol. III, p. 206.

"I have been much abused in all the magazines lately for my catalogue. The chief points in dispute lie in a very narrow compass; they think I don't understand English, and I am sure they don't; yet they will not be convinced, for I shall certainly not take the pains to set them right. Who they are I don't know; the highest I believe is Dr. Smollett. . . ."

volved, it might be supposed that the *Critical Review* never raised its voice except to condemn. Unfortunately a critical journal is more often remembered for its caustic wit than for its delicate appreciation. Jeffrey's attack on the *Excursion* beginning "This will never do," is quoted in every text-book of literary criticism, while his wholehearted eulogy of Sir Walter Scott remains unnoticed. So it was with Smollett. Every time the *Critical Review* praised a book or a poem, the author accepted the compliment in silence. It was only when a note of censure was sounded that Smollett woke up to find himself infamous. And yet the *Critical Review* was at least as quick to recognize merit as *The Monthly* and more catholic in its tastes than Dr. Johnson. Gray, whom Johnson never understood, was enthusiastically acclaimed by the *Critical Review*.³⁴ Even Goldsmith, who reviewed Gray's *Odes* for Griffiths, was not as generous as the *Critical*.³⁵ *Tristram Shandy*, to take a widely different example, gets a more intelligent review from Smollett than from any other contemporary critic. Johnson thought it could never last, but the *Critical Review*, without being in any way bowled over, recommends it to the public as a work of humor and ingenuity.³⁶ It is unfortunate that Sterne's only mention of Smollett, the celebrated passage in the *Sentimental Journey* where he speaks of him as the learned Smelfungus, was not equally fair-minded.

Among the other more or less celebrated men of letters who were favorably noticed in the *Critical Review* during Smollett's editorship were Dyer,³⁷ Hume,³⁸ Johnson,³⁹

³⁴ C. R. IV:167.

³⁵ M. R. XVII:239.

³⁶ C. R. XI:316.

³⁷ Dyer's *Fleece* III:402.

³⁸ Hume's *History* II:385.

³⁹ Johnson's *Rasselas* VII:372.

Burke,⁴⁰ Adam Smith,⁴¹ and we may as well admit it, Smollett himself.^{41a} Nor was Smollett by any means oblivious to what was going on in the literary world on the other side of the Channel. Indeed, for a man whose prejudice against France is continually cited against him, Smollett's discriminating appreciation of French literature is something of a paradox. On one occasion he actually felt it necessary to apologize to his contributors for reviewing so many French books, giving as a reason the dearth of good literature in England.⁴²

How much of the reviewing was done by Smollett himself is difficult to determine. We may say that the article on Dyer's *Fleece* sounds like Smollett or that the review of Burke's *Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful* shows none of his characteristic vigor of expression, but these are matters of opinion rather than fact. From the letter to Garrick already quoted, it would appear that he did nothing for the *Review* in 1760. On September 28, 1758,

⁴⁰ Burke's *Essay on Sublime and Beautiful* III:361.

⁴¹ A. Smith *Moral Sentiment* VII:383.

^{41a} The reviews of Smollett's *History* in the *Critical* though not fulsome were certainly very cordial. In 1758 a pamphlet purporting to be written by one Thomas Comber was published, entitled *A Vindication of the Great Revolution of England*, in which Smollett was accused of being a partisan of the Stuart family, and the *Critical Reviewers* severely reprov'd for eulogizing such a grossly inaccurate work. The *Critical Review* replied (VI. 226) maintaining that the charges were groundless, "as any one could see who took the trouble to read the history," and that though the pamphlet was signed by Comber it was actually written by Smollett's old enemies, Griffiths, Shebbeare, and Dr. Hill. In conclusion the reviewer states that in spite of all attacks "10,000 copies of the history are weekly purchased by the subjects of Great Britain besides those that are sold in Ireland and the plantations."

Smollett's farce *The Reprisal* was also reviewed perhaps a little too handsomely. (C. R. III. 157.)

"Impartial judges and those who have real taste, allow the author of this piece to be not only a master of genius and invention, but happily just at drawing characters."

⁴² C. R. IV:256.

he writes to his friend Dr. Moore in answer to some criticisms about the *Critical Review* that he has not "had leisure to do much in that work for sometime past." When we remember the number of literary ventures on which he was engaged during the years 1756-61, it is difficult to imagine how he found time for the *Critical Review* at all. In 1756 came *The Compendium of Authentic and Entertaining Voyages* in seven volumes, which he supervised and for which we know he wrote the excellent account of the expedition to Cartagena. The year 1757 saw Garrick's production of his farce *The Reprisal. The History of England*, a work which Smollett produced in fourteen months and for which he read some three hundred volumes, was published in 1757-58. During the next two years he was editing the *Modern Part of an Universal History*,⁴³ and on January 1, 1760, he started with Goldsmith a new periodical called *The British Magazine*. Few men can have been more busy than Smollett during these years. Of his multifarious literary activities he has left us a wonderful picture in *Humphry Clinker*, where through the mouth of Mr. Jerry Melford he describes his own experience as author, compiler and general purveyor to the booksellers. According to this account his house was open to all "unfortunate brothers of the quill, whom he treated with beef, pudding, and potatoes, port, punch

⁴³ *The Modern Part of an Universal History, from the earliest Account of Time*. 44 vols. London, 1759-66.

Smollett assisted in the compilation of this work and is supposed to have contributed the Histories of France, Italy and Germany. He mentions certain difficulties in connection with the publication of this work in his letters to Samuel Richardson. (Smollett's Miscellaneous Works. Anderson, Edinburgh, 1820. Vol. I, pp. 173-180.)

Another popular compilation in which his name also appears is *The Present State of all Nations. Containing a geographical, natural, commercial, and political history of all the countries in the known world*. 8 vols. London, 1764. A second edition was published in 1768.

and Calvert's entire butt-beer,' in return, we suppose, for long hours spent translating Voltaire or amassing facts for the *Universal History*.

In spite of all these irons in the fire, Smollett was undoubtedly the driving force behind the *Critical Review* for at least the first two years of its existence, and though he wrote less for it as time went on, his personality still dominated the periodical. Otherwise we can hardly account for its being so constantly associated with his name. The attention paid to all works of medicine and surgery was surely due to him. His most intimate friends in London were medical rather than literary. We know, for instance, that it was Smollett who directed the prolonged literary warfare of his friend Dr. Hunter in the fourth volume of the *Critical Review*. It was again unquestionably Smollett who reviewed Dr. Lucas' *Essay on Waters*. His favorite medical hobby was the curative property of salt water, and when Lucas denied its efficacy, all Smollett's pugnacity welled up to the surface.

Literature, history and medicine—around these three Smollett built up the *Critical Review*. Any book that fell within their vast limits Smollett presumably felt himself capable of judging, and we suspect that he imparted not a little of his cocksureness to the Society of Gentlemen who assisted him. The identification of these gentlemen, of whom apparently there were five,⁴⁴ still presents certain difficulties. One, we know, was David Malloch (or Mallet) a Scotsman who was much in demand among his literary compatriots for his knowledge of pure English. Hume earnestly applied to him to purge his history of barbarous Scotticisms. He was a man of some small reputation as the author of a few tragedies, but Johnson spoke no more than the truth when he said that he had only

⁴⁴ C. R. IV:333.

“talents enough to keep his literary reputation alive as long as he himself lived.” Thomas Francklin, another contributor, was of heavier caliber. As a former professor of Greek at Cambridge and the author of a translation of Sophocles long considered one of the best in the English language, he could be relied upon to supplement the more sketchy knowledge of his colleagues. His wide acquaintance in the literary world must also have been an asset. At Westminster School, which he attended both as scholar and usher, he was the contemporary of Cowper, Churchill, Cumberland, George Colman and Warren Hastings. Of his other labors we may mention the *Centinel*, a literary weekly which he wrote entirely himself and which, probably as a consequence, died young, and the translation of Voltaire for which Smollett was ostensibly responsible. Francklin himself, although his name appears on the title page of all but the first volume, probably delegated most of the work to some hack still lower in the literary scale.

Assuming Smollett to have included himself among the “five persons concerned in writing the *Critical Review*” we are left with two vacancies to fill. The subsequent fame of one of these two reviewers must compensate for our ignorance of the other. Oliver Goldsmith, who had been forcing his way into literature via Griffiths’ garret, was the only man, so far as we know, who contributed regularly to both *Reviews*. His first article for the *Critical*, an urbane condemnation of Massey’s translation of Ovid’s *Fasti*, was published in November, 1757. During the next year he wrote nothing for Smollett. Forster suggests that he was offended by one of Smollett’s sallies against the *Monthly*,⁴⁵ in which “goody and gammer Griffiths” were reminded that though “we never visited your garrets we know what sort of doctors and authors you employ as

⁴⁵ C. E. IV:469.

journeymen in your manufacture." However that may be, Goldsmith returned to the *Critical Reviewers* in January, 1759, and wrote seventeen articles for them between that date and March, 1760. Perhaps he decided that, after all, Smollett's quick temper was less galling than Griffiths' incessant slave-driving. Of the articles for the *Critical* the most interesting is the review of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, which indicates how far Goldsmith's intuitive feeling for literature could take the place of systematic scholarship. His relations with Smollett in the meantime must have become steadily more cordial. In June, 1757, he had reviewed his *History of England* for the *Monthly Review* with a courtesy that the rival editors might well have emulated. Again, in one of the most delightful papers of the *Bee* (No. 6), he reverted to Smollett in a way that must have gratified him by admitting him to the Coach of Fame in company with Hume and Johnson.^{45a} We are not surprised then that when Smollett and Newbery, the bookseller, decided to try their luck with a new magazine, they sought the services of the young Irishman who lived in Green Arbor Court.

John Newbery, "a red-faced good-natured little man who was always in a hurry" as he is described in the *Vicar of Wakefield*, deserves a word in passing. He was the first bookseller to make the issue of children's books a business of any importance. Whether or not he wrote *The Renowned History of Giles Gingerbread* and *Mrs. Margery Two-Shoes* himself, or whether Goldsmith or somebody else wrote them for him, he at least had the imagination to recognize their appeal. In those primitive times when children were seen and not heard, and when most books were eminently unsuitable for them, he was the first man to bring literature within their ken. Newbery's

^{45a} Goldsmith admits him only as a novelist, not as a historian.

other speciality was Dr. James' Fever Powders, a quack medicine of marvelous virtue, which he dispensed together with his literary wares at the sign of the Bible and the Sun in St. Paul's Churchyard. Not content with combining the trades of bookseller and apothecary Newbery was constantly launching newspapers and magazines. The *Universal Chronicle*, for which Johnson wrote the *Idler*, and the *Public Ledger*, containing Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World* were both his ventures. Following these came *The British Magazine or Monthly Repository for Gentlemen and Ladies*, edited by T. Smollett, M.D., and others.

It was for this magazine that Smollett wrote *Sir Launcelot Greaves*, apparently the first novel to make its bow to the public in serial form. Defoe's *Captain Singleton* and the first and second parts of *Robinson Crusoe* had previously been published serially, but only after existing for some months in book form. *Sir Launcelot Greaves* was probably written, or at least begun, while Smollett was serving out his three months' imprisonment. There is little to be said in its favor except that Sir Walter Scott, always a kind critic to Smollett, considered Aurelia Darnel the most life-like of his heroines. When we remember his previous attempts at women—Narcissa from *Roderick Random* and Emilia, *Percgrine Pickle's* easygoing innamorata—this praise hardly seems inordinate. Sir Launcelot himself is nothing but a pale reflection of Don Quixote. Feeble as he is, it would seem that he set a fashion for Quixotes in English literature. Mrs. Lennox led the way with *The Female Quixote*, 1762, which was followed by Graves' *Spiritual Quixote*, far the most interesting of the family, and others including *The Philosophic Quixote*, and *The Amiable Quixote*. With all its imperfection on its head we confess to a certain fondness for Sir Launcelot Greaves. The description of the election appears to have

some shadowy affinity with the famous scene at Eatanswill immortalized by Mr. Pickwick.⁴⁶ For that reason if for no other we feel kindly toward the whole book. It may be that the resemblance exists only in our imagination, but Dickens admired Smollett tremendously, as we know by David Copperfield's own confession. At any rate, we like to feel that the Honorable Samuel Slumkey and Horatio Fitzkin, Esq., owe something, though the debt is in any case a trifling one, to Smollett's two candidates for Parliament, Sir Valentine Quickset and Mr. Isaac Vanderpelft.

Whatever else Smollett wrote for the *British Review*, and from the dedication to Mr. Pitt we gather that he was "at great labor and expense in writing original pieces," there is nothing in the magazine that compares with the twenty-odd essays contributed by the impecunious Dr. Goldsmith. During the years 1760 and 1761 Goldsmith was almost as busy as Smollett. Not only was he writing for the *British Review* and the *Public Ledger*, but he was editing the *Lady's Magazine* at the same time. That he was not ignorant of the modern art of log-rolling is proved by the vigorous puff he gave to the *British Magazine* in one of the articles for the *Public Ledger*. The article in question is called *A Description of a Wow-Wow*, by which Goldsmith means an eighteenth century culture club. One of the members had just finished reading a passage from *The Adventures of Sir Launcelot Greaves* to the entire satisfaction of the audience. "That piece, gentlemen," says he, "is written in the very spirit and manner of Cervantes, there is a great knowledge of human nature and evident marks of the master in almost every sentence; and from the play, the humor and the execution, I can venture to say that it dropped from the pen of the ingenious

⁴⁶ Ch. IX.

Dr.——.” “Everyone was pleased with the performance,” adds Goldsmith, “and I was particularly gratified in hearing all the sensible part of the company give orders for the *British Magazine*.” From all of which we confirm our previous supposition that Goldsmith and Smollett were on good terms, and that Smollett was not the impossibly tyrannical creature his enemies have sought to prove.

Of Goldsmith's own contributions to the *British Magazine* the most interesting, perhaps, is the *Adventures of a Strolling Player*, which has been supposed to be autobiographical. Among the other essays we may mention *The History of Miss Stanton*, an artless tale of seduction, in which some critics have seen the first sketch of *The Vicar of Wakefield*, but which Austin Dobson refuses to admit as Goldsmith's. For the rest, we cite as our own favorites the essays on *Taste* and *Cultivation of Taste*. Whenever Goldsmith touches such subjects he illumines them with the charm of his delightful commonsense, a quality which pervades all his writing, however much he may have dispensed with it in the affairs of life. It is not the overpowering commonsense of Johnson, which turns and rends the unessential, nor is it the purely utilitarian commonsense of Benjamin Franklin, but a more sociable quality than either, a quality that appeals to the average reader as not being hopelessly beyond his reach.

In addition to Goldsmith, Smollett secured the services of Johnson's friend, the Rev. Dr. Dodd, who was afterwards hanged for forgery. Dodd was also a friend of Newbery, for whom he edited the *Christian Magazine*, and it may have been through him that he became affiliated with Smollett. How much or for how long Dodd wrote for the *British Review* we have been unable to determine. Probably the bulk of the work was done by Smollett's literary sweatshop, for in spite of the glowing announcements

prefixed to the first volumes there is little to command attention beyond *Sir Launcelot Greaves* and Goldsmith's essays. The *British* differed from the *Critical* in being a magazine rather than a review. It contained essays, stories, short announcements of books and a summary of foreign and domestic news. One of its chief features was the copper-plate engravings, which at that time had hardly made their way into the magazines. From this innocuous publication, Smollett plunged into the controversies inseparable from political pamphleteering. In an evil moment he agreed to edit *The Briton* in support of Bute's administration. While it ran for less than a year, it alienated him from one of his best friends, and left him, as Mr. Hannay says, "aggravated and humiliated beyond endurance."

CHAPTER III

SMOLLETT THE POLITICAL PAMPHLETEER

"THE BRITON"

WHILE Smollett was sitting in judgment upon contemporary literature, writing novels in prison, translating Voltaire and grinding out history for the booksellers, England, long in labor, according to Frederick the Great, "had at last produced a man." William Pitt, an impecunious cornet of horse who had entered Parliament in 1735 as member for Old Sarum and subsequently forfeited his commission because of certain candid remarks on his Majesty's Ministers, had raised the prestige of England to a point undreamed of by his predecessors. His second administration, 1757-61, laid the foundations of the British Empire. By the capture of Montreal, Lord Amherst had completed the conquest of Canada. Three years earlier Clive had decided the fate of Bengal at the battle of Plassey. Hawke's naval victory in Quiberon Bay put an end to all thoughts of threatened invasion. In addition to these outstanding successes Fortune favored England in the side-shows as well. Byron's grandfather, Foul-Weather Jack, demolished the fortifications of Louisburg; in the West Indies, Guadaloupe was captured, while on her own coast, France suffered a galling reverse in the loss of the island of Belle-Isle. "Indeed," says Horace Walpole, "one is forced to ask every morning what victory

there is, for fear of missing one." (Letter to Sir Horace Mann, December 13, 1759.) Not the least advantage of Pitt's wars was their comparative bloodlessness. Canada cost less than fifteen hundred lives and at the spectacular victory of Plassey only twenty Europeans were killed.

There was, however, another side to the picture. In spite of his own tireless energy reinforced by enormous subsidies from his British ally, the belligerent King of Prussia had not been equally victorious. Attacked on all sides by Russia, Austria, and France, Frederick the Great had with difficulty kept his kingdom from being disintegrated. On the same day that the Russians occupied Berlin he met with an even more serious blow in the death of George II.

The new king was the first Englishman to occupy the throne for several generations. Unlike his grandfather he cared nothing for Hanover, while he did care most emphatically for the 670,000 pounds which was being paid annually into Prussian pockets. Pitt once boasted in the House of Commons that he had conquered Canada on the plains of Westphalia, but this form of conquest made no appeal to the prosaic mind of George III. It might well be supposed that the country at large would have shared the royal apathy towards Frederick the Great's struggle for existence. Frederick's perseverance, however, and possibly the fact that France was a common enemy, combined to make him a popular favorite in England, as the signboards of many a country inn still testify, or did until the Great War necessitated a realignment of heroes. Furthermore, the alliance with Frederick the Great was definitely associated in the minds of the people with victory. It is hardly too much to say that Pitt had engendered a national lust for conquest that could neither be satisfied nor allayed. Certainly George III struck no chord of sympathy when

he referred in his first speech before the Council to "the bloody and expensive war." At the instigation of Pitt, the phrase was changed in the printed copy to "an expensive but just and necessary war in concert with our allies." Along with His Majesty's ignoble longing for peace, went other traits even less calculated to win popular approval. To quote Horace Walpole again, he was under the thumb of "a passionate domineering woman and a Favourite without talents." The people might have condoned a mistress, and even chuckled over her as an indication that the young king was a lad of spirit, but the woman in this case was the essentially unromantic Princess Dowager, and the Favourite, instead of being the man who had organized victory, was an unknown Scotch Tory, whose only claim to fame was a reputed appreciation of the fine arts. Lord Bute owed his introduction to the royal household to his ability to take a hand at whist. During a rainy day at the Egham Races in 1747, Bute, who happened to be on the race ground, was summoned to the King's tent to join in a game of whist while the weather cleared. Soon afterwards he was appointed Groom of the Stole to the young Prince. Evidently he gave every satisfaction, intellectual as well as social, for when the Prince became George III, a place was immediately found for Bute in the Privy Council. Prince Frederick expressed the best and the worst that could be said about him when he remarked that "Bute was a fine showy creature who would make an excellent ambassador in any court where there was no business."

This man totally devoid of political knowledge and experience ousted Pitt from office within a year of the King's accession. The immediate occasion of his sudden rise to power was the so-called Family Compact between France and Spain. By the terms of this agreement, Louis the

Fourteenth's dream of a perpetual alliance between the two houses of Bourbon threatened once more to become a reality. Pitt getting wind of the compact wanted to declare war at once against Spain. He and his brother-in-law, Lord Temple, were the only two members of the Privy Council in favor of such energetic action. The rest of the Council led by Lord Bute were more inclined to make peace with France than to take on the added responsibility and expense of a war with Spain. Bute, hoping to curry favor in the City practically advocated peace at any price. After a long debate he won his way and on October 5, 1761, Pitt resigned in favor of his pacific rival. His resignation would have endeared him still more to the people if he had not given a handle to his enemies by accepting a pension of three thousand pounds for himself and a like amount for his wife and eldest son. Even so, the country soon forgot the pensions and he remained the national idol. On the Lord Mayor's Day, scarcely a month after he had retired, it was he who received the ovation and not the King. "At every step of his carriage," writes a gentleman in the *Annual Register*, "the mob clung about every part of the vehicle, hung upon the wheels, hugging the footman and even kissed his horses."¹ Bute, on the contrary, became steadily more unpopular. Spain, emboldened by the fall of England's great war minister, adopted a more truculent tone in her negotiations. All information about the rumored Family Compact was curtly refused while her own claims against Great Britain for alleged interference with trade were pushed with renewed vigor. In January, 1762, ambassadors were recalled and Bute was finally forced into war with Spain, thereby vindicating the policy of his predecessor. Meanwhile, his relations with the Queen Mother, with whom to put it mildly he was on

¹ *Annual Register* 1761, Part 1, p. 237.

terms of extraordinary intimacy, had not been such as to encourage confidence or respect. The print shops were inundated with cartoons in which a jackboot and a petticoat were prominently featured. Before long it became impossible for the Dowager to go to the theater on account of the offensive remarks of the mob. Other caricatures alluded to Bute's Scotch birth and the consequent favors bestowed upon Scotsmen. Nor in this particular at least was popular resentment without some foundation. "It was remarked," says Macaulay, "that Adam, a Scotsman, was the court architect, and that Ramsay, a Scotsman, was the court painter, and was preferred to Reynolds. Mallet, a Scotsman of no high literary fame, and of infamous character, partook largely of the liberality of the government. John Home, a Scotsman, was rewarded for the tragedy of Douglas both with a pension and a sinecure place."

To stem the tide of abuse that was rolling in upon him from every quarter Bute employed yet another Scotsman, to run a weekly ministerial paper. The editor, said to have been recommended by Bubb Dodington, had certain obvious qualifications for the task. He was well known as a hard-hitting journalist and though he had no political affiliations his recent published *History of England* was agreeably sympathetic to the Tory cause. His name was Tobias Smollett. It was decided that the paper in question should be called *The Briton*, by which name Bute hoped to signify that the long-standing feud between England and Scotland was a thing of the past. Unfortunately, this hope proved too optimistic. The first number of *The Briton* appeared on May 29, 1762, and it continued to champion the unpopular minister and his policies until February 13, 1763, when it died, presumably of inanition. At no time, according to Almon, Wilkes' biographer, did the circulation exceed two hundred and fifty, "which was

as little as could be printed with respect to the saving of expense." Bute had some excuse for founding such a paper in that there was already in the field a strong anti-ministerial organ called the *Monitor*.^{1a} This paper had at one time been published by Smollett's old enemy, Shebbeare, but the guiding spirit in 1762 was a certain Rev. John Entick. Some years before, Entick had written a naval history which the *Critical Review* had described as a "huge ogilo made up of seraps which few appetites will relish, and no stomach be able to digest." Whether the notice had rankled or not, the *Monitor* lost no time in ridiculing Smollett's attempt at political writing. Entick's own efforts were so virulent that the publication of his paper was prevented for several weeks owing to the confinement of the gentleman concerned on a charge of libel.

Doubtless Smollett could have held his own against the *Monitor*, but a week after *The Briton* had made its bow to the public he found himself face to face with another and a far more serious adversary. The *North Briton*, which is now chiefly remembered for the famous number forty-five attacking the King's Speech, sought to cut the ground from under *The Briton's* feet by aggravating the national prejudice against Scotsmen. The joint authors were John Wilkes, an admitted scoundrel but one of the most likable scoundrels of the age, and Charles Churchill, the unfrocked parson whose first passage at arms with Smollett has already been recorded. Lord Bute realizing that his henchman was in danger of being overpowered promptly commissioned another party writer to even the scales. His choice fell upon Arthur Murphy, a versatile Irishman who had scored some success as a playwright and none at all as an actor or a lawyer. Murphy had already

^{1a} The *Monitor* was originally founded by Richard Beekford in 1755-

had some experience in pamphleteering, having supported Henry Fox in an earlier administration. His paper, called the *Auditor*, which followed close upon the heels of the *North Briton*, was in some respects the most able of the four. It contrived to state the case for Bute's ministry with greater cogency and humor than *The Briton* without descending to the depths of personal invective into which Smollett gradually subsided. As for the *Monitor* and the *North Briton*, they scarcely made a pretense at argument. Whatever good intentions Smollett may have had, they were very soon shattered by his opponents' evident preference for mud-slinging. At this game, having no reputation to lose and being sublimely indifferent to the opinion of others, Wilkes was born to succeed, while Smollett scarcely raised himself above the status of a bungling amateur. Wilkes's characteristic remark when he was at the height of his popularity that because his name was Wilkes it did not necessarily follow that he was a Wilkite could never have been uttered by Smollett. With all his faults was mingled the virtue of fierce sincerity; he meant what he said. To remain on friendly terms with a man who mocked him and abused his country was beyond his power or desire. Wilkes, fortunately for himself, was blessed with a more resilient nature.

From June, 1762, until February, 1763, when Bute's ministry began to crumble, the Town was regaled with a weekly exhibition of journalistic cudgel play. For the moment we will leave the others in the background and confine our attention to the polemics of *The Briton*. Smollett never flinched from the difficulties of his task. His problem was to endear Bute to the hearts of the people and to make them feel, without minimizing the glory of the recent conquests, that the time was now ripe for peace. In the first number he explains, somewhat grandiloquently

—Smollett never progressed in controversy beyond the platform manner—that the *Briton* was founded “to pluck the mask of patriotism from the front of faction and the torch of discord from the hand of sedition.” The torch of discord refers to the insulting comments on court minions that had already found their way into the pages of the *Monitor*. Entick had embarked upon a series of elaborate historical parallels, by means of which it was made to appear that Bute and Sejanus, George III and Tiberius, or coming down to more recent times, the Queen Mother and Madame de Pompadour, had certain striking characteristics in common. Numbers 357 and 360 of the *Monitor*, both written by Wilkes, were particularly daring in their innuendo. He made it perfectly clear that Bute and his royal mistress had deliberately patterned their behavior upon the Abbé Bernis and the Pompadour. Wilkes found the subject so entertaining that he returned to it again in number 5 of the *North Briton*, in which he raked up the amours of Roger Mortimer and Queen Isabella. The audacity of these effusions was further increased by Wilkes’ startling innovation of printing names in full instead of leaving asterisks.

A defense of favorites must always be a thankless task, but Smollett went about it in a thoroughly businesslike way. He maintained that the only charge against Bute that could be substantiated was his Caledonian ancestry. “Granted all his excellent qualities,” says Smollett with bitter irony, “I will silence you with one word—he is a Scotchman.” Against the one damning fact of being born on the wrong side of the Tweed, he marshaled a host of achievements. Bute had severed the dishonorable German connection by the terms of which England paid out enormous subsidies without gaining a single reciprocal advantage. Far from adopting a pusillanimous policy, as his

enemies maintained, Bute had reinforced the squadron of Sir Charles Saunders in the Mediterranean and effected the conquest of Martinique. Whereas his illustrious predecessor had expended his energies in alarming fishermen along the coast of France and "breaking glass windows with guineas," as Henry Fox describes the abortive expedition against St. Malo, Bute had organized the capture of Havana and expelled the French from their temporary foothold in Newfoundland. What was even more important, he was in the act of negotiating a highly honorable and enduring peace. Such was the general line of *The Briton's* defense of Bute's policy. Most of the thirty-eight numbers, however, were devoted to exposing, or attempting to expose, the folly of the universal anti-Scotch prejudice. As usual, Smollett's rebuttal took the form of gross personal abuse.

Before considering Smollett's claims as an artist in vituperation it may be as well to test his arguments in the light of actual history. We have already noted that Bute was reluctantly drawn into a war with Spain in January, 1762, a moment selected by Spain herself when her treasure ships, which Pitt had wanted to intercept, were safely moored in Cadiz Harbor. Thus, Bute's own theory that peace was essential in view of the nation's financial exhaustion was at once discredited. On the other hand, he could point to the successful expeditions against Martinique, Havana, and the Philippines as proof that the presence of Pitt in the Cabinet was not essential to victory. The *North Briton* ridiculed Smollett's contention that Bute should be credited with these laurels, on the ground that all the measures to insure success had been taken by Pitt.² Thackeray³ obviously adopted the same point of view when

² N. B. No. 9.

³ Rev. Francis Thackeray's *Life of Chatham*.

he said that "the instrument which Mr. Pitt used still vibrated though touched by a different hand." Nevertheless, it is difficult to understand how the expedition against Havana, which did not set sail from Portsmouth until the 5th of March, 1762, can be held to redound to the glory of Pitt, who had resigned from the Government in October, 1761.

Smollett's constant endeavor to pave the way towards peace was doomed to inevitable unpopularity by the well-founded suspicion that Bute was conducting his negotiations by underhand methods. Long before the terms of peace were announced they were vehemently decried by the Opposition. Early in 1762 Wilkes had written an able pamphlet calling for the publication of the papers relative to the rupture with Spain. *The Briton* protested, just as to-day the advocates of secret diplomacy protest, that the persistent demand for documents which the Government after thorough deliberation had decided to withhold was in itself treasonable. There was no doubt that Bute's machinations could not stand the glare of pitiless publicity. In his frantic desire for peace, founded no doubt on the consciousness of his inability to wage war in the spacious manner of Mr. Pitt, he had made overtures to the court of Versailles without considering his Prussian ally. Worse than that, he was reputed to be willing to make peace without due regard to the enormous advantages gained.

The Briton lent color to this belief by maintaining that among the other evil consequences of the war was the extraordinary success that had attended English arms.⁴ "One conquest will suggest another and we shall dance after the *ignis fatuus* of glory, until we are weakened, exhausted, and unable to proceed." France, on the contrary, shorn of her possessions overseas, was actually growing

⁴ *Briton* Nos. 6 and 7.

richer instead of poorer, on the theory that the money previously squandered in the defense of colonies would henceforth remain in the national coffers.⁵ A few statements such as these, which the *North Briton* did not allow to pass unnoticed, were sufficient to prejudice the country against any terms of peace that Bute might negotiate. Otherwise, the preliminary treaty of Fontainebleau presented to the House of Commons in November, 1762, does not seem to justify the storm of protest it aroused. Spain gave up her claims to fishing rights in Newfoundland waters and permitted the British to cut logwood on the coast of Honduras. Havana, which Bute was accused of wanting to return to Spain without compensation, was exchanged for Florida. These were the issues upon which Wilkes was forever harping in the *North Briton*, and they were all settled definitely in England's favor. It went without saying that Canada, Cape Breton and Nova Scotia were ceded to Great Britain in their entirety. And yet this peace was everywhere hailed as a national degradation, ostensibly because France was allowed to keep a few islands in the West Indies. Under the able guidance of Fox it bought its way through the House of Commons. Horace Walpole's account of the transaction speaks volumes for the thoroughness of eighteenth century steamroller tactics.

"Fox was not to be daunted, but set himself to work at the root. He even made applications to Newcastle; but the Duke of Cumberland had inspired even Newcastle and Devonshire with resolution! This, however, was the last miscarriage of moment that Fox experienced. Leaving the grandees to their ill-humor, he directly attacked the separate members of the House of Commons; and with so little decorum on the part of either buyer or seller, that a shop was publicly opened at the Pay-Office, whither the mem-

⁵ *N. Briton*, No. 9.

bers flocked, and received the wages of their venality in bank-bills, even to so low a sum as two hundred pounds for their votes on the treaty. Twenty-five thousand pounds, as Martin, Secretary of the Treasury, afterwards owned, were issued in one morning; and in a single fortnight a vast majority was purchased to approve the peace!"

Bute believed, and no doubt Smollett did too, that once the treaty of peace was signed the Government would find itself in comparatively safe waters. There was never a greater mistake. Every day the rumbling of the Opposition grew louder, the wit of the caricaturists more acrid. Smollett, the Scotch advocate of a Scotch ministry, achieved a notoriety that must have been particularly galling to him. Soon after the first appearance of *The Briton* he had been held up to derision in a caricature called the Mountebank, in which Bute is portrayed as a quack doctor boasting the efficacy of his gold pills, while Smollett acting the part of mountebank calls attention to their miraculous properties. The following speech in fearful and wonderful Scotch is put into his mouth:^{5a}

^{5a} The *Mountebank* is No. 3853 and the *Raree Show* No. 3975 in the Catalogue of Satirical Prints in the British Museum edited by F. G. Stephens. Smollett figures also in the following prints: Nos. 3825, 3866, 3876, 3877, 3878, 3887, 3890, 3910, 3914, 3916, 3917, 3941, 3956, 3958, 3966, 3970, 3971, 3973, 4028. In most of these he is shown with Arthur Murphy being routed by Wilkes and Churchill. Occasionally as in No. 3917, entitled *The Evacuations or an Emetic for Old England*, he plays a more important part. Here, Smollett appears as a quack doctor, who holds Britannia's pulse while the unhappy lady is being made to vomit by Bute all the French possessions conquered in the late war. Next him stands Henry Fox armed with a huge clyster pipe ready to administer Smollett's prescription. The prescription reads as follows:

Ry Soupe Maigre
Caledon: Cacoemes aa
Ligna Calcea Q : S
fiat Mixt
pro Brit. Anus
T. S. M. D.

“By my saul, laddies, I tell ye truly I went around about and I thank my glad stars I found a passage through Wales, which conducted me to aw the muckle places in the land, where I soon got relief, and straightway commenced doctor for the benefit of mysel, and countrymen. See here, my bra’ lads, in those bags are contained the gowden lozenges, a never-failing remedy, that gives present ease, famous throughout the known world for their excellent quality. Now, as ye are a’ my countrymen, and stand in most needs of a cure, I will gie every mon o’ ye twa or three thousand of these lozenges once a year to make ye hauld up your heads, and turn out muckle men.” (*Caricature History of the Georges*, by Thomas Wright.)

After the signing of the peace, Smollett again found himself in the public prints. This time he figured as the “barker” for a “raree-show,” blowing a trumpet marked *The Briton*, while on the other side of the stage Murphy beats a drum, marked the *Auditor*. The center of the picture, as described in Wright’s *Caricature History of the Four Georges*, is occupied by a great acting barn, “from the upper windows of which Fox shows his cunning head, and points to a sign representing Dido and Aeneas going into the cave, and announcing that the policy of these two worthies is acted within.” The allusion, of course, is to Bute and the Queen Mother, who are exhibited in the front of the stage as hero and heroine. At one side a group of Scotsmen are shown dancing and rejoicing at the fire which is consuming John Bull’s home. This print was called forth by Hogarth’s political cartoon *The Times*, depicting a row of burning houses emblematic of the world in flames, which Bute with the help of a fire engine manned by Fox and Newcastle is trying to get under control, while Pitt elevated on stilts directs incendiaries to hamper the work of the firemen.

Wilkes, who had hitherto been a friend of Hogarth and who had warned him not to meddle in politics, lost no time in chastising his new adversary. In the next number of the *North Briton* (No. 17) he raked his old friend fore and aft. He insinuated that Hogarth could only portray the seamy side of life, that he excelled in mere bestiality but was hopelessly ineffective whenever dignity was concerned. Even the picture of his wife was dragged into the discussion and foully abused. Hogarth bided his time until the following year when Wilkes was standing trial for libel. Then, when he was at the height of his popularity, Hogarth brought out the famous portrait in which every feature was limned with such artful malevolence that Wilkes appeared like some sublimated fiend.

The campaign of personal abuse initiated by Wilkes and Churchill very soon exhausted Smollett's limited stock of patience. As far as we can tell, he had undertaken the editorship of *The Briton* in perfect good faith. He believed in his cause and he meant to present it to the best of his ability. His last letter to Wilkes, dated March 28, 1762, expresses the hesitation he would always feel at having to disagree with him. (See Smollett's letters to Wilkes in Appendix.) It is melancholy, but none the less true, that a few months after that letter was written the authors of *The Briton* and *North Briton* were taunting and blackguarding each other like two foul-mouthed fishwives. The reasons for the break can be summed up in the one word—Scotland. A mutual friend of them both, Dr. Armstrong, the poet, became estranged from Wilkes for the same reason. "I cannot with honor and decency," he writes, "associate with one who had distinguished himself by abusing my country." Wilkes, however, was not the man to sentimentalize about broken friendships once he had decided to hound a man out of office. Being a

born demagogue he understood the national psychology better than Smollett. When the blood is up argument, be it never so reasonable, cannot compete with invective. Smollett's arguments were often grossly unreasonable, but even if they had been flawless England would never have listened. The "forty-five" was too fresh in their minds for Englishmen to take kindly to a Scotch ministry. Bute had played no part in the Jacobite rising, but the family name was Stuart, and for the great body of public opinion that one damning fact was enough. His method of insinuating himself into power and his exclusive patronage of the Scotch would have antagonized the few Tory friends in England he might have had. Of the many poetical diatribes against Scotland we need mention only Churchill's *Prophecy of Famine*, published in January, 1763, which coming on top of the *North Briton* may well have convinced Smollett that a proper understanding between the two countries was as remote as it had been on the day of Culloden.

In the very first number of the *North Briton*, Wilkes began his policy of baiting Smollett. He asked him by what authority the *Briton* displayed the Royal Arms at the head of its paper. Actually Wilkes knew perfectly well that the imposing insignia referred to the publisher, one Mr. Coote, whose place of office was at the King's Arms in Paternoster Row, but he affected to believe that *The Briton* aspired to infallibility as a Government publication. He goes on to promise his readers that he will "avoid the numerous Scotticisms the *Briton* abounds with" and concludes by thanking Heaven that he is "unplaced and unpensioned." The subject of pensions afforded both sides infinite merriment. *The Briton* is pained that so sublime a patriot as Mr. Pitt should accept a pension; the *North Briton* delights in running through the list of hireling slaves rewarded by Lord Bute. Among others John-

son is treated with scant respect. Churchill, who was always ready to knife Johnson or Smollett, links them both together in his poem, *The Author*.

Some, dead to shame, and of their shackles proud
Which Honour scorns, for slavery roar aloud;
Others half-palsied only mutes become
And what makes Smollett write makes Johnson dumb.
(251-254)

As a matter of fact, Smollett, though he was paid for his work on *The Briton*, was never pensioned.

The bickering over the use of supposedly Scotch words would be almost too puerile to mention but for its continual recurrence. Smollett was peculiarly sensitive to any suggestion of provincialism. Whenever a word he had used was criticized, he defended it vehemently and at the same time disparaged one of his opponent's flowers of speech. Thus, Smollett maintains that "glorification"⁶ is a reputable English word and Wilkes counters by asserting that it is "a cant word of the illiberal and illiterate Scotch presbyterians."⁷ On the other hand, *The Briton* wonders where his adversary could have picked up the word "vouchsafement," to which Wilkes replies by referring him to his fellow-pensioner's Dictionary.

While Smollett prided himself upon the Attic taste evinced in his vocabulary, he was always fond of introducing characters that gave his racy humor a chance to assert itself. He even found room for them in the unlikely pages of *The Briton*. One of these characters, a peasant woman named Winifred Bullealf, shows that the idea of Winifred Jenkins of *Humphry Clinker* was already germinating in his mind. She writes a letter to the editor of

⁶ *Briton*, No. 11.

⁷ *N. Briton*, No. 11.

The Briton complaining that her husband had been hired to shout for Pitt among the mob at Temple Bar and Guildhall, for which he got only five shillings and half a gallon of rum.

Although my neighbor Firkin says you cant rite English therefore must be a Scotchman; and being a Scotchman you have no right to call yourself a Brittin; and as how you are a vagabond people, that come over in shoals with every fair wind, like locusts to devour us; yet I know what's what. There are good and bad of all countries, and may hap your Lord B--e may behave as honourable as some who held their heads very high in the city of London. There is Sir Dogberry Verges of our ward, who was made a knight for speechifying, and subscribes himself the dear friend of the Great Orator P—; I remember well is the time, when he has no more than—but no matter for that. You must know, Mr. Brittin, that he bespoke my husband to hollow among the mob at Temple Bar and Guildhall, as having a special good counter-tenor voice; and I assure you he did not spare it as we have many witnesses to prove. Sir Dogberry promised him his own vote, and the interest of Mr. Alderman Grog, to make him clerk of the parish when there should be a vacancy; but the old man's dead, and another chosen; and all that my husband got for tearing his pipe to pieces, was poor five shillings and half a gallon of new rum. Now, I know as how they want voices to rail at your countryman; to swear he has sold Newfoundland to the French, and is going to bring in Popery and the Pretender; but I am resolved they shall no more dance to his pipe, unless he is better paid for his music. My husband can hollow bass as well as treble. —A word to the wise, Mr. Brittin, and so I remain hereafter, as it may be,

Your humble servant

WINIFRED BULLCALE.

(*Briton*, No. 11.)

There can surely be no doubt that this letter clearly foreshadows the inconsequent loquacity of Winifred Jenkins.

If Smollett had confined himself to such methods *The*

Briton would have established a unique reputation for good-humor. We have already seen, however, that Smollett was as quick to take offense as any man. If he was not as ingeniously foul-mouthed as Wilkes he was certainly just as personal. While the *North Briton* was flinging its mud at Scotsmen in general in the hopes that some would cling to Lord Bute, *The Briton* concentrated its fire upon Wilkes and his associates. So much has been said about this question of scurrility that perhaps it will be as well to let Smollett speak for himself. In the following passage "Jacky Dandy" stands for Wilkes, "Paedagogus Latro" for Lloyd, and "Bruin" for Churchill. It may be remembered that the *Critical Review* had already fallen foul of Churchill and Lloyd, and that the quarrel precipitated by the review of the *Rosciad* had not been allowed to die down.

"But, if the lords, the commons and the city are fast friends to the present ministry, it may be asked whence flow these tides of scurrility and treason, these deluges of filth and sedition that drown our daily papers, and stink in the nostrils of mankind? From a fourth estate distinguished by the name of Rabble, which I divide into three corporations, viz., Hedge-coffee-house politicians, bankrupt mechanics soured by their losses, and splenetic sots, who change their opinions no oftener than their linen. These illustrious tribes are led by an equal number of chiefs, viz., Jacky Dandy, Paedagogus Latro, and Bruin. Jacky is what the world calls a buck and a smart; his father was a painstaking man, and having scraped together some money (the Lord knows how) left this spark a gentleman. Jacky no sooner fingered the cash than he felt a strange ambition to become a wit, made himself master of Joe Miller and Vade Mecum, frequented the green room, crack'd jokes in all companies; and finally procured an

introduction to Bruin and Paedagogus. Here all parties found what they sought for. He could treat; they could scribble; and though Jacky's friends are not of the highest order, they will probably procure him an elevation, that may cause an increase in the dimensions of his peruke."

"Paedagogus is a melancholy instance of merit unrewarded. In his halcyon days he enjoyed the important post of deputy usher to an academy, whence being driven, for reasons best known to himself, he now keeps a shred of existence together by begging subscriptions, and spunging on school-boys. Sometimes he feeds on Bruin's offal, whom he frequently follows and helps out with soap of blasphemy, ribaldry and treason." *Briton*, No. 13.

Quite possibly this number of *The Briton* may have caught the attention of Hogarth, for when in the following year he wanted to square accounts with Churchill for his *Epistle to William Hogarth*, he caricatured the poet as a bear hugging a foaming tankard of ale and clinging to a pole made of *North Britons*.

This specimen of Smollett's spleen could easily be duplicated in another number of *The Briton*. Often he is merely angry, but occasionally he strikes a happy vein of satire. In Number 15, for instance, there is an amusing dramatic dialogue between Lord Gothamstowe (Lord Temple) and Captain Iago Aniseed (Wilkes) in which they discuss the terrible news that a Scotch scullion is being employed in the Royal kitchen. Unquestionably Smollett chafed under the lash of ceaseless attacks on Scotland and he was uncertain how best to meet them. At one moment he weakly confesses that he would be sorry to see the Kingdom ruled by a Scotch administration; then again he maintains that the King has a perfect right to choose his ministers "from among any department of his own subjects." Perhaps, as he suggests later in the *Adventures of an*

Atom, Bute denied him necessary information. Whatever the reason, the argument of *The Briton* grew steadily weaker and the invective more shrill.

Next to Wilkes and Churchill the chief target for Smollett's satire was the popular idol, Mr. Pitt.⁸ In the character of Ben Israel Ginn, which anticipates some of the nastiness of the *Atom*, and again as Will Pitot and Will Timoneer, Pitt is made to appear as a disloyal and spiteful turncoat. No doubt there was a certain inconsistency about Pitt's policy. As a young man he had ardently denounced Walpole's Hanoverian tendencies. He had inveighed against Carteret's system of waging war by paying subsidies to German princes, which was precisely what he did himself, but we believe there was a more personal reason for Smollett's enmity. During one of his abortive attempts to bolster up Bute's reputation he lets fall the following clue. "Does he (like Pitt) glory in an open contempt of all literary merit; and cloak his disregard to writers with the pretence of his disliking their flattery?"⁹ Considering that Smollett's *History of England*, and more recently his *British Magazine*, were both dedicated to Pitt, we can only suppose that he must have suffered some slight, which political differences tended to intensify.¹⁰

⁸ *Briton*, Nos. 14, 26, 28.

⁹ *Briton*, 20, 35.

¹⁰ Against this theory, however, it is only fair to quote from one of Smollett's letters to his friend and biographer, Dr. John Moore, June 4th, 1757.

"I am pleased with the kind expressions in which you mention my dedication to Mr. Pitt, who has treated me with that genuine politeness by which he is as much distinguished in private life as by his superior talents in the service of his country."

Some account of the Family of Smollett of Bonhill. By J. Irving. Dunbarton, 1859.

In the dedication to the *Compleat History*, Smollett had appealed to Pitt as "a consummate judge of literary merit." This phrase is difficult to reconcile with the *Briton*'s professed contempt for Pitt's philistinism.

A few of Pitt's adherents were also made to feel the weight of Smollett's displeasure. Pitt's brother-in-law, Lord Temple, who was supposed to have financed the *North Briton*, we have already mentioned. Others include the Duke of Newcastle, who appears twice in *The Briton*, once as "Tom Give-Place or Buy-Vote" and again, in the last number, as "Goody-Tripe," also William Beckford, the Lord Mayor, famous in his own day for his support of Wilkes, but not so famous to posterity as his son "Vathek" Beckford. Smollett, alluding to his Jamaican birth, speaks of him as "one who hath so long exerted absolute power over a community of negro slaves."

Throughout these attacks *The Briton* always maintained that unlike its opponents it never outstripped the bounds of decorum. Poor Smollett! He honestly believed that he had behaved with grave dignity and that he had argued his case strictly upon its merits. *The Briton* did not die down in a blaze of glory; rather was it snuffed out by the jeers of his adversaries. It may have been some consolation to Smollett that *The Auditor* did not survive him and that Bute himself was forced out of office two months after his champions had subsided into silence (April, 1763).

We cannot take our leave of *The Briton* without calling attention to the last number, in which Smollett strikes a note from *Roderick Random* and *Peregrine Pickle*. He was always most at home with his *Tom Bowlings* and *Commodore Trunnions*. It is none the less curious that the farewell appearance of the sailor in Smollett's work should take place in the unlikely surroundings of *The Briton*. The theme in this case is of no particular importance, it is the language that counts. The sailor describes himself as part owner of the good ship *Britannia*, which "Goody Tripe" (Duke of Newcastle) and "Will

Timoneer" (Pitt) would have run aground but for "Jack North" (Bute) who, at the critical moment snatched the rudder out of their hands.

"You must know," he writes to *The Briton*, "I am part owner of the good Ship *Britannia*, and generally sail on board as supercargo, so that tho' I be not a professed seaman, I know enough to distinguish when we go at large or closehailed, and can lend a hand upon occasion, to haul forward the main-top-bowling.

"In my first voyage, our Master was a timorous, trifling old fellow, that would be always creeping along shore and taking in our sails when it blowed but a capful of wind. The men used to call him an old bumboat woman, and swore he always sweated at sight of Mother Shipton's chickens. I could have put up with his caution; but I found the poor old fellow's brain was but very ill-timbered. Instead of steering in a direct course to the Westward before the wind, he always insisted on going North-about, and had a particular pleasure in loitering away our time, with the expense of wear and tear, victualling and men's wages, in tacking to and fro in the German Ocean.

"At first, I was so unskilled in navigation, that I did not know we were on the wrong track, until I was undeceived by Will Timoneer, one of our hands aboard, who coming upon the quarter-deck, began to abuse the master by the name of Goody Tripe, and declared that if we did not alter our course, we should in less than two glasses be bump ashore at the mouth of the Weser. This Will Timoneer was never counted a thorough seaman, though he was rated able, and at this juncture acted as one of the boat-swain's drivers. He could hollow so loud as to hail at the distance of half a league; he was well stowed with ginn, and would hold your jaw with e'er a fisherwoman at Billingsgate. Besides, he had got the trim of all the scrappers

and scrubbers on board, who danced to his whistle whenever he piped and now fellowed in his wake to prefer his complaint against the master."

We have quoted enough to show that Augustus Albion, as the sailor signs himself, belongs to the family of Pipes and Hatchway. Thus ends *The Briton*.¹¹ No biographer, however partial, can pretend that Smollett's venture into politics was anything but a failure. He was less amusing than Wilkes or Arthur Murphy and no more convincing. It was unfortunate that his sympathies led him to back the wrong horse, but the fact remains that his colleague, Murphy, a man of infinitely less genius, was regarded as a serious antagonist (*North Briton*, Nos. 10 and 11), while Smollett's efforts soon came to excite only contempt.

After reading the thirty-eight numbers of *The Briton* we are more than ever convinced that Smollett was an artist struggling in an unfamiliar medium. His gift for vigorous narrative combined with broad characterization counted for nothing and yet, as we have seen, it was continually striving for expression. Shortly after the publication of the last *Briton*, February 12, 1763, Smollett suffered a cruel loss in the death of his only child, a girl of fifteen. Her death, his own ill-health and the sense of ignominy resulting from failure, drove him to leave the country. The opening letter of the *Travels through France and Italy*, expresses the embittered state of his mind. (June 23, 1763.) In this letter he speaks of himself as "traded by malice, persecuted by faction, abandoned by false patrons, and overwhelmed by the sense of a domestic

¹¹ An anonymous pamphlet in favor of a Scotch-English "reap-proachment," entitled *A North Briton Extraordinary* was published in 1755. Halkett and Laing in their *Dictionary of Anonymous Literature of Great Britain* have attributed this pamphlet to Smollett. Unfortunately the *Dictionary* does not state the source of the information.

calamity, which it was not in the power of fortune to repair." Six years later, he purged his system of the bilious rancor that had been accumulating since *The Briton* fiasco in those two singularly nasty volumes comprising *The Adventures of an Atom*.

CHAPTER IV

SMOLLETT THE TRAVELER

SMOLLETT'S *Travels through France and Italy* (2 vols., London, 1766) is one of those curious books that excite considerable attention when first published, then disappear completely underground, only to emerge a hundred and fifty years later as a classic.¹ They are written in the form of letters to various friends in London, most of them doctors judging by the medical details with which Smollett intersperses his reflections on French life and manners. The correspondence extends almost exactly over two years from June 23, 1763, the date of the first letter from Boulogne, to June 13, 1765, when he is back again in Boulogne, gazing with longing eyes at the white cliffs of Dover. The better part of those two years were spent at Nice, where he had gone in the hope of tranquillizing his nerves and building up his health. Like his distinguished compatriot of more recent times, Smollett was "ordered south"; unfortunately the cure, like Stevenson's, was only temporary. The seeds of tuberculosis fostered by a sedentary life of intense application could not be eradicated. The fact that Smollett was an invalid colors, or rather, discolors, his whole attitude towards traveling. According to a French commentator there was another still more potent cause for Smollett's jaundiced view of the Conti-

¹ The *Travels* have recently been republished in the *World's Classics* Series (Oxford University Press) with an introduction by the late Thomas Seecombe, that is invaluable to the amateur of Smollett.

nent. "Le grand malheur de Smollett, ce n'est pas encore d'être mal portant, c'est de vouloir voyager en grand seigneur et d'être parcimonieux."² At any rate, what with ill-health and the continual fear of being overcharged, Smollett was in no mood to enjoy the adventures of the road.

The first letter³ from Boulogne describes the filthy inns between London and Dover, the rascality of ship captains, and the horrors of arriving at a French port in the middle of the night. The seizure of his books at Boulogne affords Smollett a fine opportunity for a diatribe against the "droit d'aubaine."⁴ Actually the books were returned upon application to the Earl of Hertford, British ambassador to Paris, but not before Smollett had scored his first point against French tyranny. The journey from Boulogne to Paris evokes a long stream of complaints against French inns. At Montreuil and at Abbeville, he found good accommodation, but everywhere else he met with "abundance of dirt and the most flagrant imposition." The innkeepers are uniformly discourteous. "You are served with the most mortifying indifference at the very time they are laying schemes for fleecing you of your money." It seems a pity for his own sake that Smollett could not have stayed longer in Paris instead of posting through to Lyons.⁵ Had he stayed longer, his friend David Hume, who was in Paris at the time, might have introduced him to the salon of Madame Geoffrin. Smollett's comments

² *Voyageurs en France*. A. Babeau. Paris, 1885, ch. 17.

³ Smollett's party included his wife, the two young ladies to whom she acted as chaperon, and his servant.

⁴ According to this law, if a foreigner died in France, the King seized all his effects even though his heir should be on the spot. Sterne, himself, who set forth on his *Sentimental Journey* in the best possible frame of mind, is equally irritated by the "droit d'aubaine."

⁵ The only letters from Paris are dated October 12. On October 19 he writes from Lyons.

on French society at its best would have been worth having. As it is, his strictures on the people, their manners and customs, are founded on insufficient evidence. Beyond innkeepers and hostlers and the casual acquaintance of the road he appears to have met and talked with nobody.

And yet Smollett's cantankerous letters possess a certain virtue that is not shared by his more elegant contemporaries. If he saw nothing of the France that was known to Hume or Horace Walpole,⁶ if he did not move in the same exalted society as Adam Smith, who was traveling on the Continent at the same time as tutor to the young Duke of Buccleugh, at least he did not attempt anything beyond his ken. What he sees he reports with the most meticulous accuracy. Moreover, his range of vision is extraordinarily wide. Few travelers have combined the two rôles of moralist and scientific investigator more happily. In one letter he describes the fantastic head-dress of the ladies and their hideous masque of painting. In another, these trivialities are apparently forgotten and we watch him gravely measuring the amphitheatre at Cemenilion with pack-thread.⁷

The journey to Lyons with its inevitable discomforts due to his bad health tried Smollett's temper to the breaking-point. At Sens where he has to wait for a relay of horses he starts to blackguard a fellow-traveler on the assumption that he was the innkeeper. The ingenuous account of his mortification on discovering the truth is one of those winning touches of self-revelation that always endear him to us even at his worst. Many men have been as quick to anger but few have acknowledged their faults more generously. "I dare say he (the traveler) did not

⁶ *Life of David Hume*, by J. Hill Burton and H. Walpole's *Letters to Madame du Deffand*.

⁷ Letter XVI.

fail to descant upon the brutal behavior of the Englishman; and that my mistake served with him to confirm the national reproach of bluntness, and ill-breeding, under which we lie in this country. The truth is, I was that day more than usually peevish, from the bad weather, as well as from the dread of a fit of the asthma, with which I was threatened: and I daresay my appearance seemed as uncouth to him, as his traveling dress appeared to me. I had a gray mourning frock under a wide great coat, a bob wig without powder, a very large laced hat, and a meager, wrinkled, discontented countenance."

From Lyons Smollett traveled on to Montpellier, partly to try the effect of the boasted air upon his constitution and also to examine the Roman ruins in the neighborhood. From the standpoint of his health the visit was not a success. An incessant downpour of rain brought back his asthma and fever, so much so that he determined to consult Professor F--, the "Boerhaave of Montpellier." Smollett was one of those difficult patients who only consult a doctor to confirm their own opinions. Furthermore, instead of seeing the doctor he submitted in writing a long account of his symptoms. The result was inevitable. Professor F--'s first mistake was to reply in French, Smollett having written a highly professional letter in Latin. It was even more galling that the French doctor should have taken an entirely different, and as it subsequently appeared, a more correct view of Smollett's malady.⁸

⁸ For an account of Smollett's illness see the statement by Dr. Norman Hall, p. XXXIII, *Smollett's Travels*, edited by T. Seecombe, Oxford University Press, 1907. A copy of the first edition of *Smollett's Travels*, with notes in his own handwriting, now in the British Museum, identifies Professor F. as Dr. Fizès. There seems to have been some disagreement about this gentleman's professional ability. See the article in the *Nouvelle Biographie Générale*, also Estève—*La vie et principes de M. Fizès*, Montpellier, 1765.

While he was at Montpellier, Smollett went on several excursions that had a far happier effect upon his spirit than his correspondence with doctors. At the Pont du Garde near Nismes our crotchety invalid forgets all his prejudices and waxes suddenly enthusiastic. In Versailles he had seen only a "dismal habitation," a "fantastic composition of magnificence and littleness," but here at last is something that he defies "the most phlegmatic and stupid spectator to behold without admiration." Unfortunately the mood did not last. Montpellier was gay and consequently expensive, and Smollett had neither the health nor the money to enjoy the pleasures it offered. The journey to Nice via Tarascon, Fréjus, and "an agreeable little fishing village named Cannes" provided the usual squabbles with innkeepers in which Smollett was always worsted. By his refusal to adapt himself to the custom of the country in such matters as eating fish on Friday he laid himself open to a continual round of vexation. In vain he invoked the local magistrate as the English traveler of to-day might threaten to write to the *Times*. The pity of it was that Smollett could have saved himself infinite discomfort by the simple method of tipping, but though he was prepared to pay extra for good service in England, in France he stood rigidly upon his rights.⁹

Smollett's accuracy and his many-sidedness is nowhere better illustrated than in his description of Nice. As a doctor and an invalid, he is naturally interested in the climate to the extent of keeping a careful registry of the weather. The topography of the country, its history, the lately-introduced silk industry, the patois spoken by the

⁹ In Letter 12, Smollett mentions a journey from Bath to London in which at an extra cost of six shillings he was accommodated "with elegant chaises and excellent horses." Apparently he never tried the effect of such liberality during the whole course of his travels in France and Italy.

natives—everything interests him down to “the daffodils blowing in full glory, with such beauty, vigor, and perfume, as no flower in England ever exhibited.” It has been claimed and with some justice that Smollett discovered the Riviera. That is to say, he was the first to call the attention of his countrymen to its special attractions.¹⁰ Smollett’s keen eye also recognized the glorious possibilities of the Corniche road. Instead of traveling from Nice to Genoa in a felucca, as he was compelled to do in order to avoid the troublesome circuit of the Alps, he advocated the road that was built some hundred years later along the sea-coast. From Genoa he made his way still by felucca to Lerici, and thence by land to Pisa, where for once he found himself housed in a very good inn.

At Pisa and subsequently at Florence and Rome the letters assume a slightly different character. Smollett dwells as usual upon the mishaps of the road, but he devotes more of his attention to art criticism. It is a mistake, for which Sterne is largely responsible, to suppose that Smollett was a dyspeptic grumbler and nothing more. Certainly he grumbled and passed what seemed to his contemporaries heretical judgments upon famous works of art, but with it all he had a fine faculty for appreciation. At first glance he may appear to anticipate Mark Twain in the ruthless way he strips everything of its romance. The Tiber is no more than “an inconsiderable stream, foul, deep and rapid” (Letter 29). “The Pantheon looks like a huge cockpit open at the top,” there is no beauty

¹⁰ “Ce fut Smollett qui le premier fit connaître malgré lui, tous les agrémens de cette contrée à ses compatriotes. Je dis, malgré lui, car il eut l’injustice de s’en plaindre quoiqu’il lui dût le rétablissement de sa santé. Depuis ce temps, il est de mode en Angleterre d’aller passer l’hiver à Nice: ainsi, dans cette saison, on y compte beaucoup de riches Anglais.” *Voyages en Savoie, en Piémont, à Nices et à Gènes*. A. L. Millin, Paris, 1816, Vol. 2, p. 107.

in the Venus de Medici—plenty of such categorical statements are scattered throughout the letters. Smollett, however, never deliberately tries to startle us with his unconventionality. He is merely a downright, unsentimental traveler, not ashamed of his emotions, although not willing like Sterne to bask in them, and above all not willing to repeat, parrot-wise, the factitious enthusiasm of others. With that engaging honesty which makes him the best of companions even in his bad humor, Smollett admits his limitations as a connoisseur. “After all, I do not set up for a judge in these matters, and very likely I may incur the ridicule of the virtuosi for the remarks I have made. But I am used to speak my mind freely on all subjects that fall under the cognizance of my senses, though I must as freely own, there is something more than common sense required to discover and distinguish the more delicate beauties of painting.” (Letter 28.)

As examples of his genuine enthusiasm we need only mention his admiration for the bronze gates of the cathedral at Pisa, which hold him spell-bound, and his intelligent appreciation of Michelangelo and Raphael. In the same way, as Mr. Seccombe has already noted, Smollett’s art criticism was often in advance of his time. His remarks on the Venus de Medici, for instance, which branded him as an arch-Philistine, are largely endorsed by the cultivated opinion of to-day. It is interesting to compare the verdict of G. S. Hillard, a typically cautious New Englander, on the same statue. “I hardly dare set down the impressions which this celebrated statue made upon me. The courage with which Cobbett assails the supremacy of Shakespeare is a quality of doubtful value, and not to admire the Venus de Medici seems a solecism in taste nearly as singular. Perhaps my expectations were raised too high for any form hewn from marble to reach; at any

rate with a feeling like that of a single dissenting jurymen in an exciting case, I confess to a disappointment, which though lessened by subsequent visits, never entirely disappeared."¹¹

Smollett was no less forthcoming with criticism of his own countrymen than he was with strictures upon the French and Italians. He was disgusted by the ostentatious extravagance of the average English traveler. "I have seen," he says, "in different parts of Italy, a number of raw boys, whom England seemed to have poured forth on purpose to bring her national character into contempt. Ignorant, petulant, rash and profligate without any knowledge or experience of their own, without any director to improve their understanding or superintend their conduct." (Letter 29.) This was not mere ill-humor peculiar to Smollett. Chesterfield warns his son not to consort with the idle Englishmen lounging their way through Europe, and Congreve has a witty passage to the same effect in *The Way of the World*.¹² Apparently the Grand Tour was responsible for a vast number of coxcombs and would-be connoisseurs, a species of humanity which Smollett invariably despised regardless of nationality.

The homeward journey from Rome led him through Perugia and Arezzo to Florence and Lericci, and so back by felucca to Nice. Whatever pleasure he might have

¹¹ G. S. Hillard. *Six Months in Italy*. Boston, 1853.

¹² Fainall: 'Tis for the honour of England, that all Europe should know we have blockheads of all ages.

Mirabel: I wonder there is not an act of parliament to save the credit of the nation, and prohibit the exportation of fools.

Fainall: By no means; 'tis better as 'tis. 'Tis better to trade with a little loss, than to be quite eaten up with being overstocked.

The Way of the World, Act I, Sc. 2.

Cf. also Pope's remarks on the same subject. *Dunciad* IV, 311-320.

taken in the hill-towns of Italy was marred by the "extortion of villainous publicans" and the execrable state of the roads. The last stage before Florence is typical of the hardships he was perpetually undergoing. One of the coach-wheels flew off in the neighborhood of Ancisa, where his driver tries to persuade him to spend the night, but Smollett after one look at the filthy bed-chamber of the inn insists on pushing on to his destination. The road is nothing but a succession of steep mountains, down which one of his horses tumbles and hangs by the neck, so that he was almost strangled. Eventually he has to walk, "plunging in the mud up to the mid-leg at every step," and at the same time obliged to support his wife, "who wept in silence half-dead with terror and fatigue."

Such incidents of travel were not exceptional, especially with Smollett, whose studied parsimony laid him open to continual mortification. The return through France, however, was more agreeable. At Aix he took the waters with some benefit and the journey back to Paris elicited nothing more serious than the usual "Plagues of Posting." It has already been suggested that Smollett's experiences of traveling were unnecessarily grim. Not to mention Sterne, with whose spirit of delicate philandering, Smollett had nothing in common, he can be easily refuted out of the mouths of other travelers. The eighteenth century in England produced a plentiful crop of *Voyages and Travels*.¹³ One of the most enlightening of these, as far as the technique of travel is concerned, is *The Grand Tour*, by Thomas Nugent,¹⁴ containing a carefully-prepared European itinerary with a list of the usual expenses. Ac-

¹³ A list of such books referring particularly to France and Italy is given in the Appendix of Seecombe's edition of Smollett's *Travels*.

¹⁴ 4 volumes, 3rd edition, London, 1778. Smollett knew of this book and refers to it rather disparagingly in Letter 29.

according to Nugent, "travelling is nowhere more convenient than in France with respect as well to carriages as accommodations on the road. . . . Their land carriages are of four sorts, viz., post-chaises, the carosse or stage coach, the coche, and the diligence or flying coach. Their post-chaises are made in much the same manner as ours and are to be had at a minute's warning all over the kingdom. . . . With regard to provisions on the road, your safest way, if you travel post, is to know the price of everything before you order it; but with the stage-coach, your meals are generally regulated at fixed prices, as with us; your entertainment is exceedingly good, and the whole expense seldom exceeds five or six livres a day. The Diligence is a kind of stage-coach so called from its expedition, and differs from the carosse in little else but in moving with greater velocity." Smollett and his party traveled post, and in spite of all precautions were habitually overcharged. Probably they omitted the precaution of asking the price before ordering.

Another traveler whose testimony may well be compared with Smollett's is Philip Thicknesse.¹⁵ His *Observations on the Customs and Manners of the French Nation* (1766) was adversely reviewed in the *Critical Review*, for which Thicknesse appears to have held Smollett personally responsible. He was also the author of *Useful Hints to Those who make the Tour of France*, London, 1768, *A Year's Journey through France and Part of Spain*, 2 vols., Bath, 1777, and numerous other miscellaneous works including the pamphlet on midwifery,¹⁶ already mentioned. In spite of his evident dislike of Smollett, Thicknesse corrobo-

¹⁵ Philip Thicknesse, 1719-92, is now chiefly remembered as the friend and patron of Gainsborough. As a young man he went out to Georgia and was later employed by the trustees of that colony, until he lost Oglethorpe's favour by criticizing him too plainly.

¹⁶ See p. 33.

rated him in many details. His dislike was founded, as was that of so many others, on the fact that Smollett was a Scotsman and a critic. Having just been damned himself in the *Critical Review*, he doubtless took a keen pleasure in ridiculing Smollett's *Travels*. "When the arch-critic," says Thicknesse, "puts forth anything, when Toby the martinet in literature honours the world with an account of his travels, the public are gulled and imposed upon, if they do not meet with truth, purity of style, delicacy of sentiment and sterling judgment throughout the whole performance; from a writer by profession every propriety is expected, every absurdity is glaring."¹⁷ Thicknesse goes on to complain that Smollett spent too much time discussing his own health and that his book ought to have been called *Quarrels through France and Italy for the cure of a pulmonic disorder*.

In the matter of expense Thicknesse maintains that Smollett was either egregiously extravagant or outrageously imposed upon. Writing from Calais, 1767, he says, "I traveled for this time as grand as Dr. Smollett, for I was obliged to have six horses to my coach because we are more than two persons in it." Both he and Nugent agree that the proper price for a post-chaise from Paris to Calais is three louis d'ors (a louis d'or was about a guinea) whereas Smollett paid six louis d'ors for a berline. The cost of a packet to yourself from Dover to Calais is five guineas according to Nugent and three according to Thicknesse. Smollett admits to having paid six.¹⁸

¹⁷ *Useful Hints*, London, 1768, p. 2.

¹⁸ In one of his later books, *A Year's Journey through France and Spain*, Thicknesse's opinion of the *Travels*, though far from just, is somewhat mellowed. "Could Dr. Smollett rise from the dead, and sit down in perfect health, and good temper, and read his travels through France and Italy he would probably find most of his anger turned upon himself. But, poor man! he was ill; and meeting with, what every stranger must expect to meet at

These financial details, insignificant as they may seem, indicate some of the difficulties with which Smollett was confronted. He was not a rich man, but owing to ill-health, a petulant temper, and ignorance of the ways of the country, he was continually spending more money than he could not afford. No wonder that he complained when we consider the peculiar array of disabilities under which he traveled. If an author were to be judged on the one score of good humor Smollett's case would be poor indeed, but his querulousness is no more and no less of a blemish than the savagery of Swift or the irony of Voltaire. The generation that delights in realism can hardly afford to ignore Smollett's Travels. Testy and discontented he may be, but his observations are accurate and he is never dull.

most French inns, want of cleanliness, imposition and incivility, he was so much disturbed by those incidents, that, to say no more of the writings of an ingenious and deceased author, his travels into France and Italy are the least entertaining in my humble opinion of all his works. (*A Year's Journey through France and Part of Spain*, Bath, 1777, 2 vols. Vol. I, p. 3.)

CHAPTER V

SMOLLETT THE SATIRIST

WE have already noted in a preceding chapter how Smollett the pamphleteer was continually hovering over the domain of Smollett the novelist. Though the result was not a happy one we suggested that the failure was due, not so much to lack of ability as to the inherent hopelessness of the cause he was championing. A Scotsman paid to support a Scotch Administration offered a target for abuse that the sorriest marksman could hardly miss. Smollett was discomfited and driven from the field, but his confidence in himself remained unbroken. *The Travels through France and Italy* indicate that he was not afraid to state his own mind, however heterodox his opinions. *The Adventures of an Atom* err still further from the sunny highway of popularity. They belong to that curious offshoot of the Novel family, now more than ever démodé, called political fiction. This uncouth species enjoyed considerable vogue in England during the early eighteenth century. Mrs. Manley's *Memoirs of the New Atalantis*, an insufferably long-winded attack upon the Whig administration in the reign of Queen Anne, was published in 1709. Hard upon its heels came Arbuthnot's *History of John Bull*. Within another few years political fiction had reached its high-water mark with the *Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World*, by Lemuel Gulliver. Swift's great masterpiece so utterly transcends everything else of its kind that it can hardly be called political fiction at all. It does not, as do Mrs. Manley, Arbuthnot and Swift

himself in his *Account of the Court and Empire of Japan*, require interpretation as a prerequisite to enjoyment.

While Smollett was no doubt aware of his predecessors in this field we are unable to trace their influence upon his *Adventures of an Atom*. The formula for a work of this kind does not, of course, permit of any extensive variation. Mr. Hannay thinks that the spurious second part of *Candide* may have supplied him with some hints, but aside from the fact that *Candide* and the Duke of Newcastle are honored by their respective sovereigns in the same way, i.e., repeated kicks on their posteriors, the two books have little in common. If we must look for parallels the closest would seem to be Charles Johnstone's *Chrysal or the Adventures of a Guinea*. Johnstone's satire published in 1765 covers almost exactly the same period and includes many of the same characters as Smollett's *Atom*. The reflections on contemporary events are equally caustic, though Johnstone is perhaps more inclined to admit the possibility of disinterested action than Smollett. He is, moreover, distinctly Whiggish in his opinions. Pitt and Frederick the Great are painted in the most glowing colors, while Churchill actually appears in the guise of a good Samaritan. *The Adventures of an Atom* concede no semblance of virtue to either party, but the Tories emerge from the general mud-slinging to slightly better advantage than the Whigs. For the rest, the adventures of the guinea were more varied than those of the atom and less circumscribed by political history. The necessity of a key is hardly felt in reading Johnstone. Not that the references to Wilkes or Fox or George II are by any means obvious, but they are only incidental to the story. Smollett's diatribe, however, is completely unintelligible without some knowledge of the events that fired his savage indignation.

The Adventures of an Atom present the pageant of English history from about 1752 to 1766, as seen by a man of jaundiced imagination. The first edition appeared anonymously in 1769 with the erroneous date 1749 on the title page. A second edition was printed in the same year with the correct date. The mechanism of the book is simple and somewhat unnecessarily disgusting. The atom tells the story to one Nathaniel Peacock, "haberdasher and author of the parish of St. Giles." The narrative subsequently falls into the hands of "S. Etherington," who after assuring himself that it was in no way "actionable," presents it to the public. Incidentally, Smollett took the precaution to cross the Channel before the *Atom* was published.

While Peacock is sitting quietly in his study he is suddenly aroused by a voice "seemingly proceeding from a chink or crevice in his own perieranium." The voice, which announces itself to be an atom, forthwith records its life history. It came into existence in the Empire of Japan, was enclosed in a grain of rice, eaten by a Dutch mariner and brought by him to the Cape of Good Hope where it was discharged in a scorbutic dysentery. Eventually, after being raised to vegetation in a salad and devoured by an English supercargo, it found its way in the course of sundry unattractive, physiological experiences into the body of Nathaniel Peacock. Having thus enumerated its transmigrations since leaving Japan, the atom proceeds to unfold "some curious particulars of state intrigue." Japan, it need hardly be said, stands for Great Britain.¹

The general temper of the work may be gauged at the

¹ The vogue of using the Orient as a foil to the Occident, need hardly be insisted upon. Montesquieu and Goldsmith are perhaps the best known exponents but there were many others.

outset by Smollett's description of the "Japanese." Their chief qualities are fickleness and superficiality. They are "elated to insolence by the least gleam of success and dejected to despondence by the slightest turn of adverse fortune . . . the Japanese value themselves much upon their constitution, and are very clamorous about the words liberty and property; yet, in fact, the only liberty they enjoy is to get drunk whenever they please, to revile the government, and quarrel with one another. . . . Notwithstanding these capricious peculiarities, the Japanese are become a wealthy and powerful people, partly from their own insular situation, and partly from a spirit of commercial adventure, sustained by all the obstinacy of perseverance, and conducted by repeated flashes of good sense, which almost incessantly gleam through the chaos of their absurdities." Starting from the premise that the English nation is composed of knaves and fools it is hardly to be expected that the portraits of individuals should be exactly flattering. Smollett gores everybody in the political arena without regard to rank or party. His first victim is Got-hama-baba (George II) a prince "imbued with no knowledge, illumed by no sentiment and warmed with no affection; except a blind regard to Fakku-Basi (Hanoverian policy) which seemed indeed to be a disease in his constitution." In the *History of England*, George II appears as a very different sort of person. There, Smollett expatiated upon the "extent of his understanding," "the splendor of his virtue," "his munificence and liberality." Inconsistency is not a vice peculiar to Smollett, but inasmuch as he was forever taunting Pitt with his change of policy this complete volte-face cannot be allowed to pass unnoticed.

The sketch of Fika-kaka (the Duke of Newcastle) is even more ruthless, and probably more accurate. The Duke

seems to have had a genius for inspiring contempt and yet remaining in office. For thirty years as Secretary of State and ten more years as First Lord of the Treasury this ineffective, fussy little man controlled the House of Commons. Under the able tutelage of Sir Robert Walpole, he learned the art of political jobbery and carried it to a point of perfection undreamed of by that pioneer in bribery. At one time he is said to have returned one-third of all the borough members of the House. The feasibility of such wholesale jobbery can be better appreciated when we remember that out of a total population of some eight millions only a hundred and sixty thousand were electors. Lord Chesterfield's remark that the Duke was a compound of most human weaknesses untainted by vice or crime is the kindest thing that could be said about him. Undoubtedly it is true that he craved power rather than money, that during his long official career he reduced his fortune from twenty-five thousand pounds to six thousand pounds a year, and that when he retired he refused a pension, but in spite of these negative virtues he remains a poor creature.

Smollett's antipathy was founded upon a contempt for his character, shared by most contemporaries and all historians, enhanced by a profound dislike for his policies. Newcastle was wedded to the idea of a vigorous prosecution of the war in Germany. Although quite incapable of the vigorous prosecution of anything himself, he nevertheless clung to the alliance with Frederick the Great as a means of permanently weakening France. As we have already seen, Smollett, in international politics if not in private life, was a peace-at-any-price man. The arguments of *The Briton* and *The Adventures of an Atom* are substantially those of Israel Mauduit, a political writer of the period, whose pamphlet *Some Considerations on the Ger-*

man War (1760) excited considerable comment. Mauduit deprecates the tendency of the ministers to make England play the Knight Errant of Europe. Furthermore, he inveighs against the Hanover connection as "giving up all the advantages of our situation and joining our island to the continent." With these views Smollett was thoroughly in sympathy. In the character of Fika-kaka he lost no opportunity for exposing Newcastle's absurdities. He calls him "a statesman without capacity, or the smallest tincture of human learning; a secretary who could not write; a financier who did not understand the multiplication table, and the treasurer of a vast empire who never could balance accounts with his own butler"—an arraignment of incompetence which recalls his candid remarks on the professional attainments of Admiral Knowles.

One of the most attractive traits of Smollett's character was his readiness to retract an intemperate estimate. It was this instinct that led him to apologize to Garrick for "the wrongs done him in a work of fiction," and to go out of his way to pay honor to Fielding's memory. All the more significant is it that in *Humphry Clinker*, by far the best-natured of all Smollett's works, the Duke of Newcastle almost outdoes Fika-kaka in absurdity. The general ineptitude of his remarks culminates in the timely discovery that Cape Breton, where His Majesty's troops had been waging war for some time, was an island. "No wonder that this nation prospers," says the ambassador from Algiers, "seeing it is governed by the counsel of idiots; a species of man, whom all good musselmen revere as the organs of immediate inspiration."

If the Duke of Newcastle combined in his person the quintessence of ignorance and absurdity his satellites shine with an almost equally perverted brilliancy. Sti-phi-rum-poo (Lord Hardwicke), Ninkom-poo-po (Lord Anson),

Foksi-rokhu (Henry Fox), and Gotto-Mio (Duke of Bedford) are all caricatures, willfully unjust but easily recognizable to their contemporaries. Sti-phi-rum-poo is a fine example of Smollett's more venomous method. By mingling the best and the worst of Hardwicke's career, by glossing over his achievements and fastening upon the ugly side of his character Smollett contrives to strip the Lord Chancellor of every shred of humanity. He is made entirely responsible for the campaign of frightfulness that succeeded Culloden, while the "Butcher" Cumberland who was at least equally guilty is unexpectedly exculpated. Let us see what Smollett makes of the barbarous verdict, subsequently mitigated, that Lord Kilmarnock and Lord Balmerino should be hanged, cut down alive and their bowels burned before their faces.

"Sti-phi-rum-poo, and other judges in the south, were condemning such as survived the sword, to crucifixion, cauldrons of boiling oil, or exenteration; and the people were indulging their appetites by feasting upon the viscera thus extracted. The liver of a Ximian (Scotsman) was in such request at this period, that if the market had been properly managed and supplied, this delicacy would have sold for two obans a pound or about four pounds sterling." There is only one man in English literature who can rival the bitterness of this satire. Indeed, it would seem as if Smollett must have steeped himself in Swift before being able to perpetrate such savagery.

Hardwicke's real contribution to English jurisprudence, the revision of the marriage laws, is passed over in a single derogatory sentence. "Sti-phi-rum-poo thought he has procured a new law for clapping padlocks upon the chastity of all the females in Japan, under twenty, of which padlocks he himself kept the keys." The facility with

which minors could get married and the disgraceful habit of allowing degraded persons to perform the ceremony in the Fleet, or even in a brothel, at a moment's notice, was effectually ended by Hardwicke's insistence on a marriage license. His Act with some modifications and improvements remains in force to-day. It met with serious opposition in both houses especially from Henry Fox, who had himself made a most successful runaway match. That the bill actually passed was due more to Lord Mansfield, then solicitor-general, than to any other one person. In the course of the debate Fox seeing that the game was lost attempted a reconciliation, but Mansfield would have none of it. "I despise the invective," he said, "and I despise the retraction. I despise the scurrility, and I despise the adulation." During the same year 1753, Hardwicke and Newcastle sponsored a bill providing for the naturalization of Jews. Smollett reflects the current unpopularity of this measure, which was repealed almost as soon as passed owing to Newcastle's terror of jeopardizing his majority.

Hardwicke's son-in-law, Lord Anson, fares no better at Smollett's hands than his colleagues. His voyage around the world is ignored and his capture of an immensely rich prize off Manilla with a pitiful squadron of unseaworthy ships is deliberately minimized. Smollett was probably annoyed by Anson's sudden rise to power. As First Lord of the Admiralty he effected a thorough reorganization of the navy, but the public is always suspicious of political generals and admirals. No definite instance of inefficiency is cited but Smollett insinuates that Anson was incapable of delegating power. His satire, however, is based on Anson's character rather than his record. "Ninkom-poo-po" is represented as an austere, ignorant, cold-blooded

minister. While he was certainly not ignorant there seems to be some justice in the other two epithets. Horace Walpole at least was of the same opinion.

Smollett's review of the Duke of Newcastle's colleagues concludes with a sketch of Fox, the Duke of Bedford, and Lord Granville. To Fox's general ability and untrustworthiness he does no more than justice. "Foksi-roku" hardly differs from Lecky's sober portrait of the same man. "Gotto-Mio," on the other hand, is a flagrant caricature of the Duke of Bedford. Next to Lord Chesterfield he was the ablest viceroy of Ireland during the eighteenth century and the first to show himself unequivocally in favor of a relaxation of the penal code. He may have been insolent, as Smollett says, but he was not a fool. It is strange that Smollett should have been so particularly virulent against Bedford considering that the Peace of Paris, which he championed so vociferously in *The Briton*, was largely dictated by that statesman. The Duke of Bedford also negotiated the unpopular treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1748. The chief criticism against him from a national point of view seems to have been that he failed to extract as much out of England's enemies as was expected of him. The public, by whom he was cordially disliked, maintained that being a great land-owner, he was always interested in concluding peace on any terms in view of a possible reduction of the Land-Tax.

Lord Granville, whom we feel certain Smollett had in mind as "Soo-san-sin-o," was in many respects the most attractive statesman of the age. In the key to the *Adventures of an Atom*, compiled by the late Mr. Seecombe for Henley's edition Soo-san-sin-o is identified as Grenville, but this is surely a misprint. Grenville was never president of the council, nor was he a man of extensive learning and elegant taste. Granville, on the contrary, fits every

requirement. He was one of those rare statesmen, who did not care whether they remain in office or not. Lord Chesterfield says of him that "he had a great contempt for money" and "a most uncommon share of learning for a man of quality."² Smollett's unexpected gentleness towards the Duke of Cumberland has already been mentioned. Apparently he believed, we know not on what authority, that the Duke "by dint of clemency and discretion extinguished the last embers of (Jacobite) disaffection."

Having thus brought all the leading statesmen on to the stage, with the exception of Pitt and Bute, who appear later, Smollett proceeds to pick his way through the history of the period carefully selecting those events which offered most scope for his satire. There was indeed ample material for ridicule. From the death of Henry Pelham in 1754 to the formation of the coalition ministry of Pitt and Newcastle in 1757, England sustained one humiliation after another. Braddock's defeat in 1755 followed by Admiral Byng's failure to relieve Minorca was universally regarded as the handwriting upon the wall. The general fear of a French invasion was so acute that Parliament hastily brought over a body of Hessian and Hanoverian soldiers and distributed them through the country. As Pitt himself said, the country was so unnerved "that 20,000 men from France could shake it." Smollett makes excellent game of the national panic inspired by these reverses. The King's intense satisfaction on being told of the soldierly appearance of Braddock's troops as they lay dead on the battlefield could hardly be bettered. We can

² Apparently he was the one statesman whom Smollett respected. Cf. H. Clinker, First ed., vol. 1, p. 236. "Since Granville was turned out there has been no minister in the nation worth the meal that whitened his periwig." In later editions of Smollett, *e.g.*, Anderson, Edinburgh, 1820, this passage reads "since Grenville was turned out," etc., instead of "since Granville was turned out."

imagine Shaw taking his General Burgoyne in *The Devil's Disciple* from Smollett's picture of the impeccable Braddock. Equally good is the description of the cabinet meeting where it transpires that only three members of the Council of Twenty-eight have any idea as to the whereabouts of America.

The marvel of it all is that Smollett included so much in so small a compass. The historian of the Seven Years' War faces something of the same problem as the small boy at a three-ring circus. Prussia, America and India have to be watched all at the same time. Smollett flits easily from one hemisphere to another without giving the appearance of dissipating his energies and without forgetting that to be effective his satire must never stray too far from the Cabinet. Thus, he seizes upon the futility of Admiral Boscawen's efforts to prevent the French fleet from entering the Gulf of St. Lawrence and he makes capital fun of General Bligh's descent upon St. Malo, but he reserves the full force of his irony for the Government's pitiful sacrifice of Admiral Byng to a bloodthirsty populace. The execution of Byng unexpectedly paved the way for the Newcastle-Pitt coalition ministry. The national panic was only partially allayed by the execution of an admiral; something more was needed to restore confidence and that something could only be supplied by the driving energy of Pitt.

Smollett, as we know from *The Briton*, was no admirer of Pitt. The very name of the man excited him to a frenzy of vituperation. *The Adventures of an Atom* shows no radical change in this attitude, except for one inadvertent moment when Smollett admits that "he generally happened to be on the right side." Otherwise, the Orator Taycho (Pitt) is depicted as an ignorant, self-seeking demagogue. Admitting that Smollett saw the worst of

everybody and everything in *The Adventures of an Alom*, there is still a dash of truth in his caricature of the Great Commoner. That he was ignorant compared with such men as Granville or Burke needs no argument. He never steeped himself, as they did, in philosophy or international law, and he never acquired even a rudimentary knowledge of finance. His own sister, according to Macaulay, said of him that he knew nothing accurately except Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. Smollett is also perfectly justified in his reiterated charges of political inconsistency. It is an unfortunate coincidence that Pitt's conversion to the Hanoverian policy he had so stoutly condemned in the days of Walpole, removed the only obstacle between him and the Duke of Newcastle's Cabinet. To infer from that, however, that his whole character was vitiated is notoriously unjust. There may have been something of the charlatan about Pitt in his later years, but few statesmen have risked their popularity so often and so unflinchingly. When the country was clamoring for a scape-goat he refused to join in the hue and cry after Byng. He denounced the popular prejudice against Scotsmen even though it was fomented by his own supporters, and while defending the constitutional right of Wilkes to sit in Parliament he branded that idol of the people as "a blasphemer of his God and a libeller of his King."

Smollett's brief account of the terms of the coalition ministry of 1757 is curiously confirmed by Pitt himself. "Fika-kaka was continued treasurer, with his levees, his bonzas (clergy) and his places; and orator Taycho undertook, in the character of chief scribe, to protect the farm of Yesso (Hanover), as well as to bridle and manage the blatant beast whose name was Legion." Or as Pitt preferred to put it he 'borrowed' the majority of Newcastle to carry on the business of government.

The chief opposition to Taycho came from a native of Ximo (Scotland) called Mura-clami (Lord Mansfield) whom Smollett befouls, as he does everybody, but for whose intellect he admits a grudging respect. The atom on being transferred to Mura-clami's brain found it "so full and compact, that there was not room for another particle of matter. But instead of a heart, he had a membranous sac, or hollow viscus, cold and callous, the habitation of sneaking caution, servile flattery, gripping avarice, creeping malice, and treacherous deceit." Mansfield probably owed this travesty on his character to his reputation for timorous Jacobitism. There is no actual evidence that he ever sympathized with the Young Pretender, but being a Scotsman and his name being Murray he laid himself open to that suspicion. Smollett's own attitude towards Jacobitism was somewhat illogical. He was a Lowlander himself with no Stuart affiliations. At the same time it is doubtful whether any self-respecting Scotsman ever heard the name Bonnie Prince Charlie without a slight cardiac flutter. Certain it is that the battle of Culloden inspired almost his only genuine outburst of poetry, *The Tears of Scotland*.

Mura-clami's so-called treachery is proved by his final concurrence in Taycho's scheme to retrieve the farm of Yesso. Smollett is here referring to the Government's decision to wipe out the disgrace of the Convention of Closter-seven (1757) by the terms of which the Duke of Cumberland had left Hanover in the full possession of the French. Pitt's recommendation that the convention be repudiated and that an annual subsidy of seven hundred thousand pounds be paid to Frederick was sheer insanity from Smollett's point of view. As we have already suggested he did not share the national admiration for Frederick the Great. Indeed, he belabors him, under the name of Brut-an-tiffi, on every possible occasion. He minimizes

his military genius and makes the most of his attempts to ape the manners of Versailles. Above all, he denounces Pitt's cant about the proposed alliance being in the interest of Protestantism. Unfortunately as far as the peace of the world was concerned, just at the time Pitt came into power "Brut-an-tiffi" obtained two petty advantages in Tartary against one body of the Chinese and another of the Ostrog. These "petty advantages," the battles of Rossbach and Leuthen, marked the turn of the tide. Not long afterwards American affairs began to mend also. Much to Smollett's disgust "Ian-on-i" (Sir William Johnson), a provincial captain of Fatsisio (America), who had by accident repulsed a body of the enemy, reduced an old barn which they had fortified.

The history of the next few years (1758-63), the most splendid in England's military history, offered nothing very satisfactory to the satirist. Smollett is hard put to it to explain away Pitt's amazing succession of victories. To make out a case against him he has recourse to the most perverse ingenuity. By expatiating on a few insignificant failures and denying the government any credit for the conquest of Canada and India, Smollett makes it appear that Pitt, while planning nothing but disasters himself, reaped the glory of other men's successes. He maliciously points out that Sir John Mordaunt, who commanded the expedition to Fourras, which accomplished nothing, was Pitt's choice, as were also Sir Edward Bligh and General Hopson. Bligh's costly attack upon St. Malo did excite some comment but the temporary failure of the expedition against Martinique, for which Hopson was responsible, was quickly redeemed by the capture of Gadeloupe. Another defeat from which Smollett draws some comfort is Abererombie's repulse at Ticonderoga. The account of the capture of Quebec is substantially accurate

though Smollett characteristically refuses to admit the brilliant thoroughness of Pitt's organization. The masterly plan for the reduction of Canada by three concentric operations is entirely ignored. Equally perverse is the statement that Pitt had never even seen Wolfe. As a matter of fact he had not only seen him, but specially selected him for the Quebec command. It may seem absurd to tax Smollett with historical inaccuracies in a work which purports only to be a romance, but where the veil of satire is so transparent it is impossible not to demur at his willful distortion of the facts.

More interesting perhaps than Smollett's unyielding hatred of Pitt is his changed attitude towards his former patron, Lord Bute. When he was writing *The Briton* no choice was left to him. Bute was necessarily the incarnation of all the virtues and talents. Now that Smollett is writing to please himself, Bute's aureole naturally disappears. Considering the temper of the book, however, he emerges to better advantage than we could have expected. Smollett was certainly under no obligation to a man who had cast him off when he found that his support was of no value, nor was he usually slow to resent an injury. It is almost incredible, therefore, that his estimate of Bute's character should be so temperate. "Yak-Strot (Bute) was honest at bottom, but proud, reserved, vain and affected." If this seems after all but faint praise it must be admitted that the story of Bute's hopeless struggle against unpopularity is told with more kindness than anything else in the book. "In the midst of all this detestation and disgrace, it must be owned, for the sake of truth, that Yak-Strot was one of the honestest men in Japan, and certainly the greatest benefactor to the empire. Just, upright, sincere and charitable; his heart was susceptible of friendship and tenderness. He was a virtuous husband, a fond

father, a kind master, and a zealous friend. . . . There was very little vicious in his composition, and as to his follies, they were rather the subjects of ridicule than of resentment." Among these follies Smollett includes, curiously enough, Bute's partiality for his own countrymen. "Every department, civil and military, was filled with Ximians. Those islanders came over in shoals to Nippon (England), and swarmed in the streets of Meaco (London), where they were easily distinguished by their lank sides, gaunt looks, lanthorn jaws, and long sharp teeth." If this were the language of Wilkes or Churchill we should think nothing of it, but from Smollett, the resolute champion of Scotsmen, it comes perilously near to apostasy. Was it that the unending campaign of ill-natured jokes had for the moment undermined his spirit, or did he merely fall in with the popular trend of thought so as further to conceal his identity?

The pall of misanthropy which threatens to lift, or at least to become less opaque, whenever Bute's character is uppermost, settles down again with added intensity when Smollett undertakes to tell the history of his administration. Determined to establish a reputation for patronizing the arts Yak-Strot signalized his advent to power by sending out emissaries in all directions to search for merit. His investigations can discover only four or five men of genius in the whole empire of Japan. "One was a secularized Bonza (parson) from Ximo (Scotland), another a malecontent poet of Nippon (England), a third a reformed comedian of Xieoco (Ireland), a fourth, an empiric who had outlived his practice, and a fifth, a decayed apothecary, who was bard, quack, author, chymist, philosopher, and simpler by profession." Mr. Seccombe has identified the secularized Bonza as John Home, the malecontent poet as Dr. Johnson, the reformed comedian as Thomas Sheri-

dan, and the apothecary as Shebbeare. The only one of these identifications with which we venture to disagree is the last. Shebbeare's pension was apparently granted not by Bute but by Grenville. Furthermore, the description fits Dr. John Hill, or Sir John Hill as he preferred to call himself, more accurately than it does Shebbeare. Hill's multifarious activities were one of the standing jokes of the age. He was the supreme artist in quackery, literary as well as medical.

For physic and farces, his equal there scarce is:
His farces are physic, his physic a farce is.

So Garrick dismissed him and the justice of the epigram seems to have been generally conceded. On the accession of George III, although not actually pensioned, Hill³ contrived to get himself made gardener of Kensington, a place worth, according to Horace Walpole, two thousand pounds a year.

"These were all the men of superlative genius," concludes Smollett, "that Yak-Strot could find in the empire of Japan."

The story of Bute's meteoric rise to power culminating in Pitt's resignation from the Cabinet on the issue of war with Spain has already been told in an earlier chapter. Smollett, as usual, without actually flouting the facts draws inferences from them that are perfectly unwarranted. Whether England would have been justified in plunging

³ John Hill (1716-75) was one of the chief laughing-stocks of literary London. He quarreled at one time or another with Fielding, Garrick and Christopher Smart, whose *Hilliad* he inspired. Of his many voluminous works the best known is *The Vegetable System*, a Gargantuan publication in 26 volumes, undertaken at the instance of Lord Bute. He was also the author of *A Life of Lady Vane*, the lady of quality, whose memoirs Smollett included in *Peregrine Pickle*. Hill's biography, entitled *The History of a Woman of Quality, or The Adventures of Lady Frail*, was published in 1751, the same year as *Peregrine Pickle*.

into war with Spain on the strength of a supposed Family Compact between Spain and France may be questionable, but to pretend that Bute acted more honorably in the matter than Pitt is absurd. One wanted to strike while the iron was hot while the other was willing to shilly-shally until Spain had made all her preparations. In neither case did the matter present itself as a nice question in international ethics. Nor is it true that Pitt having resigned sought to undermine the ill-deserved authority of Lord Bute. On the contrary he was scrupulously careful to refrain from the general abuse of the new Prime Minister and his cohorts of hungry office-seekers. Pitt's brother-in-law, Lord Temple, may have subsidized Wilkes and the *North Briton*, but Pitt himself was too Olympian to relish that kind of support.

When he comes to the discussion of the Peace of Paris (1763) Smollett parades the old familiar arguments against Pyrrhic victories. "Japan" was in danger of being ruined by her conquests. "All those who had conquered Fatsisio and Fan-yeh (Havana) were already destroyed by hard duty and the diseases of those unhealthy climates." This is the merest prejudice and rendered doubly ridiculous by his enthusiasm over the more recent captures of Martinique and Manilla. Why should the victories under one administration be deplored as disastrous, while in the very next year under a new Prime Minister the slightest success is hailed as a heaven-sent blessing. It was fantastic to maintain that the conquest of Canada and India had drained the manhood of the country when it was well-known that these campaigns had cost England something less than two thousand men. There were excellent reasons, probably unsuspected by Smollett, for opposing Pitt's Carthaginian peace. France and Spain would have signed only under protest and then waited an opportunity to re-

deem their honor. As it was, the peace secured great advantages for England without unduly humiliating her enemies. France recovered a few islands in the West Indies, and Havana and Manilla returned to Spain in whose possession they remained until the signing of a new treaty of Paris in 1898.

Bute's worst mistake, according to Smollett, was his choice of Henry Fox to lead the House of Commons. Without his rich experience in Parliamentary corruption Bute could never have carried the Peace, but by associating himself with the most unpopular man in the country he cleared the way for his own downfall. His own unprepossessing manner, his awkwardness at Court and his obvious preference for obscure "Ximians" further alienated him from whatever friends he might have had. In spite of these handicaps, "Yak-Strot" acquitted himself well before his enemies. Smollett's method of depicting political controversy is to make the two parties fling filth and dung in each other's faces. It is a simple device and not perhaps as entirely symbolic as it sounds. At this game he admits that Jan-ki-dtzin (Wilkes) and Llur-chir (Churchill), the two mercenaries hired by Lob-kob (Temple) far surpass their opponents. Yak-Strot's dirt-men, though they played their parts tolerably well, were not to be compared with these virtuosos. The great advantage of Taycho and Lob-kob lay in the zeal and attachment of Legion (the mob) "whose numerous tongues were always ready to lick off the ordure that stuck to any part of their leaders; and this they did with such signs of satisfaction, as seemed to indicate an appetite for all manner of filth."

It is noticeable that Smollett's contempt for the populace never relaxes. Bitter as he is about Lord Hardwicke, or Wilkes, or Pitt, some expressions of understanding, if not

of sympathy, occasionally escape him, but to human nature in the mass he gives no quarter. Individually, the members of Parliament or their electors may conceivably be gentlemen, collectively they are always cads. This is the depressing doctrine he reiterates on every page.

Nowhere is this loathing for his fellow-men more evident than in the account of the collapse of Bute's government. Smollett describes the delight of Bute's subalterns over the embarrassment of their chief. They induce him to pass "certain odious measures of raising new impositions on the people" (cider-tax) whereby they hope to further his unpopularity. Their hopes were amply justified. The cider-tax, recalling Sir Robert Walpole's hated Excise Bill, aroused such frenzied opposition that Bute, now fully convinced that the country detested him, resigned the week after it was passed. Johnson's famous definition of Excise as "a hateful tax levied upon commodities and adjudged not by the common judges of property but by wretches hired by those to whom excise was paid" was heartily endorsed by the whole community.

Bute's moment of panic though it sufficed to carry him out of office, did not by any means involve any permanent distaste for politics. "He resigned the reins of government," says Smollett, "with a heavy heart though not before he was assured that he should still continue to exert his influence behind the curtain." The King's promise coincided so exactly with his own ambitions that his resignation should be regarded more as a Parliamentary trick than a concession to public opinion. During the next three years, 1763-66, England suffered under a succession of makeshifts. Grenville who took Bute's place as First Lord of the Treasury has been neatly described by Horace Walpole as "a fatiguing orator and an indefatigable drudge." More versed both in the theory and practice of government

than his predecessors he was equally lacking in tact. He had hardly been in office six months before he found it necessary to apply to the Bedford faction for support. The Duke of Bedford was no more a popular favorite than Bute, but being a great landowner he controlled votes and, with the added assistance of his disreputable friends, Rigby and Lord Sandwich, Grenville managed to stay in office until the summer of 1765. The combination of Bedford and Grenville was almost more than the King could stand. "I had rather see the Devil in my closet," he is reported to have said, "than George Grenville." As for the Duke of Bedford, his habit of breaking in upon the King's privacy and lecturing him upon his want of confidence and sincerity was unprecedented. "If I had not broken into a profuse sweat," said His Majesty, "I should have suffocated with indignation."

The royal and popular displeasure incurred by these ministers was primarily due to two entirely distinct causes. Early in 1765 George III suffered a mental breakdown and upon his recovery it was suggested that suitable regents should be appointed to provide against any confusion in the event of his death. The one member of the family the King wanted as regent was the Princess Dowager, who we have already had occasion to remark was *persona non grata* to practically the whole United Kingdom. The mere suspicion that Bute was still acting as the King's counselor sufficed to crystallize the Cabinet's objections to that lady. In a weak moment which he afterwards bitterly regretted the King consented to the exclusion of her name from the Regency Bill. As a further exhibition of their power, Bedford and Grenville compelled George III to oust Stewart Mackenzie, brother of Lord Bute, from the sinecure office of Lord Privy Seal of Scotland. "They were so elevated," says Smollett, "by their last triumph over the Ximian

favorite, that they overlooked every obstacle to their ambition, and determined to render the Dairo dependent on them, and them only."

So far it might be supposed that the Ministry had earned the gratitude of the country, but there was another and far more important controversy afoot at the time on which Grenville and Bedford proved themselves pitifully wrong-headed. John Wilkes was the bone of contention. Was he, as the Government insisted, a dangerous malefactor, or, as the people maintained, a martyr to liberty? The full story of Wilkes' tribulations and triumphs hardly falls within our scope, as the *Adventures of an Atom* only go down to the year 1766 and Wilkes was not elected for Middlesex until 1768. Smollett's account of the *North Briton*, No. 45, is admirably suggestive of his determined prejudices. It will be remembered that Wilkes had dropped a veritable bomb shell by daring to criticize the King's Speech from the throne. He called it "the most abandoned instance of ministerial effrontery ever attempted to be imposed upon mankind." On the strength of such statements he was arrested, confined in the Tower, released by order of the Chief Justice, persecuted on another charge, and generally hounded by the Government. Eventually after fleeing to France to escape the consequences of a duel, he returned to England and in spite of all opposition took his seat in the House of Commons. Smollett, as always, sides against the mob. Apart from any political considerations he knew Wilkes too well not to be disgusted at the adulation heaped upon him.

While the House of Commons was considering the Regency Bill and the King's Ministers were making themselves ridiculous over Wilkes, George the Third was conferring with the Duke of Cumberland on the possibility of forming a new Cabinet. It was this practice of double-

dealing that elicited the Duke of Bedford's astounding lecture. Pitt was approached, but refused on the grounds that Bute's influence was as strong as ever, and that until he disappeared from the political stage no ministry could ever thrive. Finally, the Grenville-Bedford coalition gave way to the Marquis of Rockingham, an agreeable nonentity, whose private secretary, a young man named Edmund Burke, is better remembered than himself. Charles Townshend, although he took office under the new Ministry, called it "a lutestring administration fit only for summer wear," which is precisely what it proved to be. In the following year, 1766, Pitt returned to power, incapacitated by gout and by an almost Wilsonian inability to co-operate with others, but still the only statesman who could command national confidence.

Smollett's account of these events is somewhat more difficult to follow than his satire upon Lord Hardwicke, Anson and the Duke of Newcastle. Down to the spring of 1763 he was, to a certain small extent, a part of what he saw. As editor of *The Briton*, whatever we may think of his prejudices, he was at least in touch with the political situation. From 1763 to 1766, however, Smollett was traveling abroad. Any news that he heard must necessarily have been secondhand. It is not surprising, therefore, that his satirical picture, without failing at all in virulence, can not be made to fit history with the same immaculate neatness. Certain characters whom we expect to meet, such as Grenville, are not even mentioned, while events which occurred at several years' interval are unaccountably telescoped.

By deliberately omitting Grenville, Smollett created difficulties for the reader, if not for himself, in connection with the Stamp Tax. The original tax was introduced by Grenville in 1765 and repealed by Rockingham in 1766.

Of this measure, Smollett makes no mention. The second Stamp Tax was advocated by Townshend in 1767 and repealed except for the tea duty in 1769. Bute was living in retirement at the time, but Smollett makes it appear that the responsibility for this unpopular tax was leveled at his head. Indeed, Bute's influence is constantly extended beyond its actual span. Just when it did cease is open to some doubt. According to the Grenville papers, Lord Grenville extorted a promise from the King as early as 1765 that "Bute should never directly or indirectly, publicly or privately, have anything to do with his business nor give advice upon anything whatever." On the other hand, Horace Walpole tells a story of Grenville and Bedford appealing to Lord Bute to use his influence with the King on their behalf in the event of Rockingham's ministry going out of power. There is, however, little doubt that by 1769 Bute's power, direct or indirect, was a thing of the past. Certainly there is no authority for Smollett's assumption that Bute and Pitt formed a coalition or even arrived at an understanding together. From the time of his resignation in 1762 Pitt steadily refused to have any dealing with the men who had made the peace. Von Ruville's *Life of Pitt*⁴ mentions an interview between Bute and the Minister, but it came to nothing owing to his determination not to serve with men whom he considered traitors.

With the mention of the Stamp Tax and the colonists' subsequent indignation over the Tea Duty, *The Adventures of an Atom* came to an abrupt close. "Nothing was heard in Japan," says Smollett, "but threats of punishing those ungrateful colonists with whips and scorpions. For this purpose troops assembled and fleets equipped; and the blatant Beast yawned with impatient expectation of being

⁴ V. Ruville III, 117.

drenched with the blood of its fellow subjects." There is no reason why the book should end at this point beyond Smollett's apparent belief that in some way it rounded out Bute's political life. Actually, as we have already noted, he was not instrumental in the passage or the repeal of the Stamp Tax. Charles Townshend, who deserved all the opprobrium Smollett could heap upon him, escapes comparatively lightly. Neither he nor Sandwich (Twitser and Zantific) are as carefully blocked in as the earlier portraits. This is the more surprising in that they both, especially Townshend, offer admirable material to the satirist. Smollett spoke out about him without reserve in *Humphry Clinker*, where he admits that "he talked like an angel on a vast variety of subjects," that "he would really be a great man if he had any consistency or stability of character," but that there was "no faith to be given to his assertions and no trust to be put in his promises."

Of the other characters who crowd on to the stage towards the end of the book the best is perhaps Praff-pat-phogg (Chief Justice Pratt, afterwards Lord Camden). It was Pratt who determined that the warrant for the seizure of Wilkes' papers was illegal, a decision which naturally did not endear him to Smollett.

In the midst of this close-knit political satire, Smollett, unhampered by the exigencies of form, often wanders off on semi-humorous, semi-scholarly by-paths. To be exact, there are four of these digressions—on trousers, Witchcraft, kicks, and surnames. They belong to a type of learned, pedantic humor, that is, perhaps not altogether unfortunately, entirely extinct. *Tristram Shandy* is full of such things (*e.g.* Slawkenbergius on Noses and the Curse of Ernulphus), but Sterne has a lighter touch than Smollett and there is no hobby-horse too fantastic for him to ride. With Smollett the strain is more obvious; his good

things are ruthlessly hauled in for our inspection, they never flash upon us with Yorick's suggestion of inevitability. The most striking of his vagaries is the dissertation on witchcraft, in which Increase and Cotton Mather are mentioned as gallant defenders of the faith. "Thou thyself," says the Atom to Nathaniel Peacock, "mayest almost remember the havoc that was made among the sootherers in one of the English colonies in North America, by Dr. Increase Mather, and Dr. Cotton Mather, those luminaries of the New England church, under the authority and auspices of Sir William Phipps, that flower of knighthood, and mirror of Governors, who, not contented with living witnesses called in the assistance of spectral evidence, to the conviction of those diabolical delinquents." Smollett's whimsical essay on surnames in which he expatiates upon "the folly of inheriting cognomina" seems to have caught the popular fancy. It was lifted en bloc from the context and reprinted without acknowledgments in the *Annual Register* for 1769 (part II, p. 193). The digressions on trousers and kicks afford an opportunity for the display of Smollett's ample pornographic powers. Otherwise, they have no particular merit—scholastic or humorous.

The reception of *The Adventures of an Atom* by the press and the public must have been eminently soothing to Smollett's jagged nerves. His old enemies on the *Monthly Review*, while remarking upon the obscenity, emphasized the spirit, humor, and satirical power of the book.⁵ The *Gentleman's Magazine* took the same view.⁶ "The folly of the multitude and the knavery of pretenders to patriotism are ridiculed in this little work with great spirit and humor; but there is a mixture of indelicacy and indecency which, though it cannot gratify the loosest imagination can

⁵ M. R., April, 1769.

⁶ *Gentleman's Magazine*, April, 1769.

scarce fail to disgust the coarsest." The notice in the *Critical Review* is naturally still more enthusiastic.⁷ "This satire," writes the estatic reviewer, "unites the happy extravagance of Rabelais to the splendid humor of Swift." The *London Magazine* was the first to hazard a guess as to the authorship.⁸ "This very shrewd and entertaining history," says the editor, "is attributed to the ingenious Dr. Smollett." After which he goes on to identify the leading characters and, in the manner of all eighteenth century reviewing, to quote copious extracts.

The public for once fully endorsed the opinion of the reviewers. Another edition was printed in 1769, a few months after the first, and ten more were called for in as many years. From then on its vogue waned. *The Adventures of an Atom* by its very nature could never aspire to permanent popularity. The next generation, if it glanced at the book at all, probably saw nothing but a combination of laborious filth and outlandish nomenclature. The very timeliness of satire often militates against it. Like slang that has gone out of fashion its charm is hopelessly irrevocable. The student may break down the barriers of time so effectually that every joke stands naked and unashamed, but the rich tang of satire can be relished only by a contemporary. Nevertheless, understanding is not barred, however impossible appreciation may be. Smollett went forth to slay the same dragons that excite the indignation of all great satirists. The brutal stupidity of statesmen, the fickleness of the mob, hypocrisy masquerading as patriotism—these were and perhaps always will be the constant butt of satire. He hated the Hanoverian policy of George II, the innate dishonesty of Whigs and Tories, and the degraded subserviency of the people. This hatred was all concentrated into the *Adventures of an Atom*. Through-

⁷ *Critical Review*, April, 1769.

⁸ *London Magazine*, May, 1769.

out the pages of that book he scattered the venom that had been steadily accumulating since his first acquaintance with politics. It was Smollett's peculiar virtue that "having unpacked his heart and fallen a' cursing like a very drab," he could yet conceive of anything so gloriously light-hearted as *Humphry Clinker*.⁹

⁹ We have already had occasion to mention Mr. Seccombe's key to the characters and places in the *Adventures of an Atom*, compiled for W. E. Henley's edition of the works of Smollett. A previous attempt at identification had already been made by William Davis in his *Second Journey around the Library of a Bibliomaniac* (London, 1825), but Mr. Seccombe's key is by far the more complete of the two. A few omissions and errors, however, still remain to be noted.

Le-yawter is obviously intended for Lord Tyrawley and not General Burgoyne. Smollett is here referring to the British expedition to Portugal, 1762-63, undertaken by Lord Bute to support the Portuguese against Spanish aggression. Lord Tyrawley, who commanded the British forces, was superseded at the end of a few months. "This officer," says Smollett, "was counted one of the shrewdest politicians in Japan; and having resided many years as ambassador in Fummia (Portugal) was well acquainted with the genius of that people." Tyrawley had been envoy extraordinary to Portugal from 1728 to 1741. Burgoyne served in the expedition but he was not an old general at the time, nor was he ever ambassador to Portugal.

Hob-nob refers not to Admiral but to General Hopson. Admiral Hopson flourished in the 17th century. It was General Hopson who made the abortive attack upon Martinique mentioned in the text.

Jeddo is identified as Germany by William Davis and as Windsor by Seccombe. The fault here lies with Smollett, who has carelessly used the word in both senses. He is often guilty of these minor inconsistencies. Fatsisio usually means North America, but occasionally it appears to refer only to Cape Breton or Newfoundland.

Seccombe omits any explanation of the "sect of Nem-buds-ju" (Jews) or of Llou-dahn and Phyll-kholl. The two latter are correctly identified by William Davis. Llou-dahn stands for the Austrian general, London, and Phyll-kholl for Lord Colville, who commanded the squadron that drove the French from their temporary settlement on Newfoundland in 1763.

With these few exceptions we believe the key to be correct and substantially complete. A few names are still unidentified. We have sought in vain to pierce the disguise of Ab-ren-thi, "an obscure fanatic Bonza, a native of the island Xicoco" (Ireland), whose collection of rhapsodies was the only book Pitt read "with any degree of pleasure."

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN SMOLLETT AND WILKES

Chelsea, March 16, 1759.

DEAR SIR,

I am again your petitioner in behalf of that great Cham of literature, Samuel Johnson. His black servant, whose name is Francis Barber, has been pressed on board the *Star* frigate, captain Angel; and our lexicographer is in great distress. He says the boy is a sickly lad of a delicate frame, and particularly subject to a malady in his throat, which renders him very unfit for his Majesty's service. You know what matter of animosity the said Johnson has against you; and I dare say you will desire no other opportunity of resenting it, than that of laying him under an obligation. He was humble enough to desire my assistance on this occasion, though he and I were never cater-cousins; and I gave him to understand that I would make application to my friend Mr. Wilkes, who perhaps, by his interest with Mr. Hay and Mr. Elliot, might be able to procure the discharge of his laquey. It would be superfluous to say more on the subject, which I leave to your own consideration; but I cannot let slip this opportunity of declaring that I am, with the most inviolable esteem and attachment,

Dear sir,

Your affectionate, obliged,
humble servant,
T. SMOLLETT.

Chelsea, March 24, 1759.

DEAR SIR,

Ecce iterum Crispinus!—your generosity with respect to Johnson shall be theme of our applause and thanksgiving. I shall be very proud to find myself comprehended in your league offensive and defensive; nay, I consider myself already as a contracting party, and have recourse to the assistance of my allies. It is not, I believe, unknown to you, that Admiral Knowles has taken exception at a paragraph in the *Critical Review* of last May, and commenced a prosecution against the printer. Now, whatever termination the trial may have, we shall infallibly be exposed to a considerable expense; and therefore I wish to see the prosecution quashed. Some gentlemen who are my friends, have undertaken to find out and talk with those who are supposed to have influence with the said Admiral; may I beg the same favour of you? The trial will come on in the beginning of May; and if the affair cannot be compromised, we intend to kick up a dust and die hard. In a word, if that foolish admiral has any regard to his own character, he will be quiet rather than provoke further the resentment of,

Dear Sir,
your very obliged
humble servant,
T. SMOLLETT.

Chelsea April 1, (1759?)

(Unpublished)

Dear Sir/

Nothing would give me more Pleasure than such an agreeable opportunity of being known to Mr. Fitzherbert. But, I must at present deny myself that Pleasure, in consequence of an Engagement a week old, which engagement I should make no scruple of breaking on this occasion, if I were not on my Good behaviour with some friends whom I disappointed a Fortnight ago. As for Johnson, I wish you may find him sensible of the obligation he owes you. I desired my Printer to tell him what you had done with respect to his black servant; but I have heard nothing of his acknowledgment. On the contrary, I saw a very petulant Card which he had sent to the Printer concerning an article in the last Review. I am

Dear Sir

With inviolable Esteem &
attachment, your much obliged
& obed^t. Serv^t.

T^s. SMOLLETT.

I know you will not forget
our affair with K-----.

Chelsea April 20 1759

Unpublished (British Museum).

Dear Sir/

Were I not restrained by a sore throat & consciousness of a very capricious constitution I should certainly avail myself of your kind invitation. The truth is, I love the Country, especially at this season, and I long to see your house at Aylesbury, as much as ever Ashmoule¹ or Gilbert Cooper² or any other wrong-headed Platonist longed to visit the Groves of Academus. I am sure I should there find much more agreeable Company, and much better cheer than ever Plato, or at least than ever his Master Socrates, knew, nor, at your Table should I have any Reason to complain that the *Sol atticum* was wanting. But for the present, I am obliged to enjoy these Pleasures in speculation only; & even this feast of imagination, am I fain to snatch as a momentary Respite from reading dull Books & writing dull Commentaries *invita Minerva*, a Task almost as disagreeable as that of dining with our friend Armstrong when the wind blows from the East, on a Loin of veal roasted with Butter sauce. I wish to God you who have so much Influence over our friend would persuade him to write an ode to *Easter* the Goddess of the East wind, so religiously cultivated by our Saxon Pregenitors, especially in the month of April: it would doubtless be the finest Satire that ever appeared; it would contain the very Essence of peevish Delicacy inflamed to a poetical orgasm. I cannot express the sense I have of all your Kindness or sufficiently acknowledge my obligation to you & Mr. Fitzherbert for the Pains you have taken to pacify our incensed Admiral who is it seems, determined to proceed to Trial but—*Turno tempus erit, magno cum optaverit emptum intactum Pallanta*—I wish you uninterrupted Happiness at Aylesbury, & indeed in such company I do not see how you can be otherwise than happy; & I am with unshaken attachment

Dear Sir

Your faithfull Serv^t.T^s. SMOLLETT.

¹ Elias Ashmole or Ashmoule 1617–92. A distinguished antiquarian and founder of the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford. His chief work is the *Institutions, Laws and Ceremonies of the Order of the Garter*.

² Gilbert Cooper (1723–69). A minor poet and miscellaneous writer. He contributed to Dodsley's Museum, 1746, under the name of Philanetes.

Chelsea Oct. 19, 1759

(Unpublished)

Dear Sir/

I am still an Invalid, otherwise I would wait on you in person, and verbally solicit your advice and assistance. K—— and his Friends talk of nothing but heavy Fines & Imprisonment. On the other hand I am informed that in actions of this Kind, it is not uncommon for the Defendant to obtain of the Attorney Gen^l. a writt of noli prosequi, as the Prosecution is carried on in the name of the Crown; & that the Attorney Gen^l. on such occasions, receives orders from the secretary of State. Nor is this any Hardship on the Plaintiff, as he has afterwards his Remedy at Common Law, for any Damage he may have sustained by the pretended Libel. My dear Sir, if you could think of any method of application to Mr. Pitt that could give me any chance for obtaining such an Interposition, I flatter myself that you would as usual, employ your interest in behalf of

Dear Sir

Your much obliged &

Affectionate humble serv^t.

T^s. SMOLLETT.

Chelsea Nov. 2, 1761

(Unpublished)

Dear Sir/

If I was not remarkably interested in behalf of the Bearer, I would not give you this Trouble. His name is Robert Love, son of the man from whose Instruction I imbibed the first Principles of my Education. He has been bred to the sea, and acted as a petty officer on board of a King's ship, to the entire satisfaction of his Commander, as will appear from the Certificates which he can produce. He has distinguished himself in some desperate Pieces of Service, particularly in boarding the french ships in Louisburg Harbour, and in attacking with boats two Privateers in Cumberland Harbour on the Island of Cuba. He was sent home from Jamaica, Commander of a considerable prize and has lately passed Examination as a Lieutenant, but being utterly destitute of Interest, I presume to recommend him to your good offices, and will vouch for his being a brave, honest & skilful mariner. Shall I beg the favor of your mentioning him to Dr. Hay, or any other Member of the Board of Admiralty?—I should think there would be no great difficulty in procuring a commission for such a man, at a time when seamen are so much in Request. I know you will forgive this freedom, & allow me to be with the most perfect Esteem & affection

Dear Sir

Your much obliged & most obed^t. Serv^t.

T^s. SMOLLETT.

Chelsea, March 28, 1762.

Dear Sir,

My warmest regard, affection and attachment, you have long ago secured; my secrecy you may depend upon. When I presume to differ from you in any point of opinion, I shall always do it with diffidence and deference.

I have been ill these three months; but hope soon to be in a condition to pay my respects to Mr. Wilkes in person. Meanwhile, I must beg leave to trouble him with another packet, which he will be so good as to consecrate at his leisure. That he may continue to enjoy his happy flow of spirits, and proceed through life with a full sail of prosperity and reputation, is the wish, the hope, and the confident expectation, of his much obliged, humble servant,

T. SMOLLETT.

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. Tobias Smollett.

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